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Early English Text Society.

Gali Meidenhad,

FROM MS. COTT. TITUS D. XVIII. FOL. 112C.

AN ALLITERATIVE HOMILY

OF THE

THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

EDITED BY

OSWALD COCKAYNE, M.A.,

ONCE OF ST. JOHNS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY,
BY TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCLXVI.

Price One Shilling.

Early English Text Society.

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The Society's Report, January, 1866, with Lists of Texts to be published in future years, etc. etc., can be had on application to the Hon. Secretary, HENRY B. WHEATLEY, Esq., 53, Berners Street, W.

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FOREWORD.

THIS treatise on the high state of virginity contains so many coarse and repulsive passages, that it was laid out for printing without a modernized version; but the printer complained that the explanatory footnotes were a trouble to the compositors and an encumbrance on the page, and the translation became a last resource. The most objectionable portions have been Latinized.

In his praise of the virgin state, the author has given such way to his zeal, as to fall into frequent attacks on wedlock; and against them the editor has sometimes entered a lively protest. No age of Christianity has sanctioned any such condemnation of "marriage honourable in all," and, of right, holy. Where any fanatics ventured on such folly, they were quickly branded, by the truer sense of the church, as unsound. None, perhaps, in our days can be so ignorant as to declare in favour of those notions. In the earliest church a warning example is seen in Tertullianus, who, though a warm and able defender of the faith, lost all credit by adopting Montanist views. Among the advocates for purity, none can rival Origenes, who went to a length which he afterwards himself reprobated, and which his editor, Bishop Huet, found so little laudable, that he refused

to believe of his auðor þat he used þe knife, and will have it þat he resorted to refrigeratives, such as hemlock is said by Dioskorides to be. Yet Origenes, devotee as he was to þe "purity" doctrines, damns, wið a full and due sentence, partly in þe language of St. Paul, þese "forbidding to marry," as holding "doctrines of devils;" and avers þat while celibacy is a state of grace, marriage is also, by just inference from þe apostolic language, a state of grace also. For þe readers full satisfaction, I add þe words of þe original: *Καὶ ἐπεὶ ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξε, διὰ τοῦτο χάρισμα ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς ὑπὸ θεοῦ συνεζευγμένοις, ὅπερ ὁ Παῦλος ἐπίσταμενος, ἐπίσης τῷ εἶναι τὴν ἀγνὴν ἀγαμίαν χάρισμα, φησὶ καὶ τὸν κατὰ λόγον θεοῦ γάμον εἶναι χάρισμα, φάσκων θέλω δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἶναι ὡς ἐμμενόν· ἀλλ' ἕκαστος ἴδιον ἔχει χάρισμα ἐκ θεοῦ, ὃς μὲν οὕτως, ὃς δὲ οὕτως.* He þen quotes Matth. xix. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3, driving home his protest against such teachers as þe auðor of Hali Meidenhad by þe words *καλλόντων οὐ πορνεύειν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ γαμεῖν*, "forbidding not fornication merely, but even marriage." Hence it is plain þat to speak evil of þe marriage estate is no tenet of any large body of Christians, or of þe early church, and in editing þis work it was fitting to declare a dissent from such teaching.

I assume, from þe tone of þe tract, its eager advocacy of nunneries and profession, its mixture of advice and authority, þat þe writer was of no less þan þe episcopal order. A probability is visible þat he was also þe auðor of þe Ancren Riwele, of þe life and passion of St. Margaret, St. Juliana, St. Kaðarine, of þe piece Si Sciret paterfamilias, of þe Oreisun of St. Mary, and of oþer tracts now lost. Þese are all in þe same homely, terse, eloquent English of þe former half of þe þirteenth century,

and are all of a devotional character, and almost all addressed to maidens, professed and veiled. Þe story of St. Margaret is distinctly named in þe Ancren Riwele as known to þe ladies to whom þe latter piece is addressed, and in þe tract now printed (p. 45) þe examples of St. Kaþarine, St. Margaret, St. Agnes, St. Juliana, St. Lucy, St. Cecilia are recommended.

If it be probable þat þe present tract is written by þe same hand, and addressed to þe same ladies as þe "Ancren Wisse," þen it is also probable þat þeir nunnery was at Tarante Kaines, in Dorsetshire, on þe Stour; for a Latin copy of þe Rule, at Oxford, in Magdalen College Library, has þe inscription, "*Hic incipit prohemium venerabilis Patris Magistri Simonis de Gandavo, Episcopi Sarum, in librum de vita solitaria quem scripsit sororibus suis anachoretis apud Tarente.*" Þe Latin Cottonian copy, Vitell. E. vii., once had, as appears from Smiths catalogue, 1696, þe following title or memorandum upon it, "*Regulæ vitæ Anachoretarum utriusque sexus scriptæ per Simonem de Gandavo, Episcopum Sarum in usum suarum sororum. Hunc librum Frater Robertus de Thorneton, quondam Prior, dedit claustralibus de Bardenay.*"

Mr. Morton sufficiently proved þat þe Latin is a translation from þe earlier English, and þe testimonies above may be reconciled wið þe date of þe language of þe English, by understanding Simon of Ghent to be þe auðor only of þe Latin version. He was bishop from 1297 to 1315.

It remains þat we imagine one of þe Poores, bishops successively of Sarum, Herbert from 1194 to 1215, and Richard from 1217 to 1229, to be þe writer of þe original English, addressed, we need not doubt, to ladies at Tarente, in Dorset. Richard, þe dean of Salisbury, was consecrated (1215) to

Chichester, and removed to Salisbury (1217), and Durham (1229), in which see he died (1237). Matthew Paris (p. 439) gives an edifying account of his death bed. The records of the foundation at Tarente are in no public repository, a few particulars only are mentioned by Dugdale: if they exist, they are in private hands, possibly those of the owners of the estates.

LONDON, JUNE, 1866.

G L O S S A R Y.

[The main part of the forms of words in this treatise is easily traced in the Saxon : and howbeit our dictionaries be defective and grammars incomplete, yet in the loss of genders and terminations, which the language had suffered in the thirteenth century, these deficiencies are of less importance. The translation and the explanations at the end of St. Marherete supersede a larger glossary, and only a few points present themselves for notice. In some instances a reexamination of the text has suggested improvements. Thus, on p. 43, the reading of B. *asaileð*, might have been admitted into the text. On p. 46, line 7, for *every* read *eternal*, as it stands a few lines lower. In p. 11, l. 28, *ahest* means *oughtest*. In the first line of fol. 127*a*, for *cruni*, which the MS. presents, perhaps *cunni*, *try*, would be a better reading.]

Auriola, p. 23.

Bere, *voice*, p. 31.

Cangun, *a broad short built man*, p. 33. CONGEON, one of low stature or a dwarf. Bailey (1759). The cammede kongons cryen after col, col, And blowen here belluwys that al here brayn brestes. Rel. Ant. I. 240. *The crooked conguns cry after coal, coal, And blow their bellows till their brains crack.*

Cheowan, *to jaw*, p. 31.

Cockung, p. 47. *Standing like a game cock to a fight, uppishness.* So Cocksy, *uppish*. (Baker Norðhants.)

Cuncweari, *conquirere*. We have here a proof that in 1230 the

English pronunciation of Latin was in accordance with that of other nations.

Erles, *earnest*, p. 7.

Euening, p. 7.

Eðeliche, *of no great value*, fol. 113*c*, 125*c*, 126*a*. Wyrta sind eaðelice gesceafta (Saxon Homilies, vol. ii., p. 464). *Worts are things of not much value.* þe rihteoise godd wule þat we demen us eðeliche aut lahe (Si sciret, fol. 5*a*). *The righteous God willeth that we deem ourselves low and of small esteem.*

Famplen, p. 37.

Forhohe, p. 25, from Forhogian, here Forhohien.

Frakele, *fragilis*, p. 7.

Goderheale, p. 29.

Halschipe, p. 5.

Hearmen, p. 47, l. 1.

Heueld, p. 21. Saxon Hæfeld,
Licium.

Huler, p. 31. ȝef alle luþer holers
were yserved so, Man schulde
fynde þe les such spouse breche
do. (Robert of Gloster, p. 26,
Hearne.)

Kenchinde, p. 17. Cinkende
hleahter *risus excessus* in Rule of
Mynchens. See Lye in cincung,
cachinnatio.

Leirwite, p. 47, (so) for Leger wite,
punishment lair.

Menskian, p. 23, *to have mercy*.

Mis for to donne, p. 17 = for to
misdonne.

Onont, p. 9.

Smirles for Smirels, p. 13.

Stikelinde, p. 17. Sticol occurs

in the Saxon, though not in the
dictionaries.

Strunden, p. 35.

Sunegild, *guilty of sin* (?), p. 43.

Sutelliche, p. 23. Saxon *Sweetol-
lice*.

Sweamen, pp. 17, 35, *to flutter,
disturb*. See Egilsson in Sveimur,
Sveimr; also Cædmon and Codex
Exoniensis; and compare the
Dansk Svæve. Dietrichs view
seems erroneous.

Swirforð, p. 23. Cf. "To come
down cock's neckling, *i.e.* head
foremost. Wilts" (Grose).

Tricchet in itricchet, p. 9.

Truckie, pp. 5, 7.

ȝettede, p. 21. See Glossary to
Layamon.

ȝiscian, p. 29, or *sigh*. See *Boet*,
p. 2, l. 27.

puftenes, p. 45, Geþoftan.

HALI MEIDENHAD.

HOLY MAIDENHOOD.

[MODERNIZED.]

Text of the discourse.
Psalm xlv. 11.

Audi filia et vide et inclina aurem tuam et obliviscere populum tuum et domum patris tui. David þe psalmist þus speaks in þe psalter to þe spouse of God, þat is, each maiden þat has maidens manners; and he saið: "Hear me, daughter, behold, and bend þine ear, and forget þy people and þy faders house." Take notice what each word here separately signifies. "Hear me, daughter," he

What each word means.

Why he calls the maiden daughter.

says. He calls her daughter, in order þat she may understand þat he is teaching her affectionately þe love of a better life, as a fader should his daughter, and þat she may þe more cheerfully listen to him as a fader. Hear me, precious daughter, þat is to say, diligently listen to me wið þe ears of þine head; "and behold," þat is, open þe eyes of þine heart to understand. "And bend þinè ear," þat is, be buxom or obedient to my instruction. She may answer

She asks why he is so earnest.

He preaches to edification,

and meets supposed objections.

and say, What is þis lore þat þou admonishest so deeply, and teachest me so earnestly? Lo, þis, "Forget þy people and þy faders house." David calls þe assembly wiþin þee of fleshly ðoughts, þy people, þat lead and draw þee wið þeir prickings of fleshly corruptions to carnal lusts, and entice þee to marriage and to a husbands embraces, and make þee to ðink what a delight þere would be þerein. How much good might grow out of þe offspring of you two! Ah! false ðoughts, cease a suggestion þat defiles þy mouð; while þou settest forð all þat seems good, and concealest all þe bitter mischief þat lieð below, and all þe

HALI MEIDENHAD.

*Audi filia et uide et inclina aurem tuam et obliuiscere
populum tuum et domum patris tui.*

David þe salmwrihte

psalm, B.

spekeð iþe santer

toward godeſ spuse

toward, B.

þat iſ euch meiden

þat haueð meidenene þeawes.

⁊ seið. Her me dohter. Bihald ⁊ buh þin eare ⁊ forȝet
ti folc ⁊ tine fader huf. Nim ȝeme hwat euch word beo
funderliche to ſeggen. Jher me dohter he seið. Dohter
he clepeð hire. for þi þat ha underſtonde þat he hire liues
lune luneliche leareð aſe fader ah hiſ dohter. ⁊ heo him
aſe fader þe bliðeluker luſtni. Jher me deorewurðe dohter.
þat iſ ȝeorne luſtne me wið earen of þin heaued. ⁊ bihald.
þat iſ opene to vnderſtonde þe ehne of þin heorte. And
bei þin eare. þat iſ beo buhfuſ to mi lare. Ho mei onſweren
⁊ ſeien. Hwat iſ nu þis lare þat tu nimeſt ſe deopliche.
⁊ leareſ me ſe ȝeorne? low þiſ. forȝet ti folc ⁊ tine fader
huf. þi folc he clepeð dauid þe eederunge inwið þe of fleſch-
liche þohtes. þat leadeð þe ⁊ drahen wið hare pricunges
of fleſchliche fulðen to licomliche luſtes. ⁊ eggeð þe to
brudlac ⁊ to weres cluppinge. ⁊ maken þe to þenchen hwuch
delit were þrin. hwuch eiſe. þe riçhedom þat tes lauedis
hauen. Hu muche god mihte of inker ſtreon waxen. A fals
folc of ſwikel read aſ ti muð uleð aſ þu ſcheaweſt forð al
þat God þunckeð ⁊ heleſt al þat bitter bale þat ter lið

her, B.

tineſ, B.

ant, B. which
reads so
throughout.
feader, B.
deore, B.
[Fol. 112d.]
heauet, B.

learst, B.

leadieð ⁊
dreaieð, B.

cluppinge, B.

great loss þat þereby arises. Forget all þis people, my precious daughter, saið David ðe prophet, þat is, cast out of þine heart all þese ðoughts. Þis is þe people of Babylon, þe army of þe devil in hell, þat is wið intent, to lead þe daughter of Sion, into þe service of þe world. þe high tower of Jerusalem was sometime called Sion, and Sion in þe English language is as much as to say, high vision. And þis tower typifies þe elevated state of virginity, þat beholds as from on high, all widows and wedded women, boð of þem beneað it. For þese, as ðralls to þe flesh, desire þe service of þe world, and remain below on earð. But she stands ðrough her exalted life in þe high tower of Jerusalem, not below on earð, but from þe high tower in heaven. Þis is typified hereby. From þat Sion she looks down on all þe world below her, and by þe life of angels, þe heavenly one, þat she leads, þough in þe body she dwell on earð, she is, as it were, in Sion, þe high tower in heaven, free beyond þem all from all worldly vexations. Ah! þe people of Babylon þat I named just now, þe host of þe devil in hell, þat is, lusts of þe flesh and eggings on of þe fiend, ever war and warp towards þis tower for to cast it adown, and draw into servitude þe maiden þat stands so high þerein, and hence is called daughter of Sion. And is she not really cast down and drawn into servitude, þat of so very high a place, of so great dignity and such honour, as it is to be Gods spouse, Jesu Christs bride, leman of þe lord, before whom all kings bow, lady of all þe world, as he is Lord; like him in reverence, immaculate as he is, and as þe blessed maiden his precious moðer is; like his holy angels, þat observe his behests; so mistress of herself þat she need ðink nought of any oðer ðing but of her leman, wið true love to please him; for he will care for her, he þat hað taken heed of all þat she wants, while she rightly loved him wið true faið. Is not, as I said, she þen sorely cast down and drawn into servitude, þat from so high elevation and so happy a freedom, shall descend so low into a man's service, as þat she shall have noðing as mistress of herself, and barter away the heavenly

He preaches with zeal.

He edifies.

Sion a high tower.

Maidens in more bliss than widows and wedded.

Babylon.

A nun has Jesus for bridegroom.

Marriage a thralldom.

under. *ƿ* al *ƿ*at muchele lure *ƿ*at ter of ariseð. forȝet al þis [Fol. 113a.]
 folc deorewurðe dohter seið dauid *þe* witeȝe. *þ*at if þeos *þ*eo, B.
 þohtef warp ut of þin heorte. þis if Babilones folc *þe* deueles
 here of helle. *þ*at if umben for to leaden in to *þe* worldes
 þeowdom Syones dohter. Syon was sum hwile iclepet *þe*
 hehe tur of *Jerusalem*. And seið syon afe muchel on
 englische leodene. afe heh sihðe. And bitacneð þis tur. *þe*
 hehſchipe of meidenhad *þ*at bihald as of heh alle widewen hehnesse, B.
 under hire ƿ weddede baðe. for þeos as flesches þralles
 beoð in worldes þeowdom ƿ wuneð lahe on eorðe. Ah wunieð, B.
 heo stont þurh heh lif iþe tur of *ierusalem* Nawt of lah T. defective.
 on eorðe; ah of *þe* hehe tur in heouene. *þ*at if bitacned
 þurh þis. Of *þ*at syon ha bihald al *þe* world under hire. ƿ
 þurh englene liflade ƿ heuenlich *þ*at leades þah ha licom- ha lead, B.
 liche wunie up on eorðe. And if as in syon *þe* hehe tur of
 hevene freo ouer alle fram alle worldliche weanen. Ah [Fol. 113b.]
 babilones folc *þ*at ich ear nempnede *þe* deueles here of free, B.
 helle. *þ*at beoð flesches lustes ƿ feondes egginge; weorreð
 ƿ warpeð eauer toward tis tur for to kasten hit adun ƿ eggunge, B.
 drahen hire in to þeowdom *þ*at stond se hehe þerin. ƿ if
 cleopet for þi syones dohter. And nis ha witerliche akast
 ƿ in to þeowdom idrahen *þ*at of se swiðe heh stal. of se þe, B.
 muche dignete. ƿ swuch wurðſchipe af hit if to beo godes
 spuse. *Jeshu cristes* brude. *þe* lauerdes leofmon *þ*at alle
 kinges buheð. of al *þe* world lauedi af he if of al lauerd. þingæ, B.
 Jlich him in halfchipe. vnwemmet af he is. ƿ tat eadi warlt, B.
 meiden his deorewurðe moder. Jlich his hali engles. *þ*at
 his heafte halden. Se freo of hire self. *þ*at ha nawiht ne
 þarf of oðer þing þenchen bute an of hire leofmon wið
 treowe luue cwemen. for he wile carien for hire *þ*at ha
 haued itaken to of al *þ*at hire biheoueð hwil ha riht luued
 him wið soðe bileaue. Nis ha þenne sariliche as ich seide
 ear akast. ƿ in to þeowdom idrahen *þ*at fram se muchel [Fol. 113c.]
 hehſcipe ƿ se feli freedom ſchal lihte se lahe in to a monnef
 þeowdom. swa *þ*at ha naueð nawt freo of hire seluen. ƿ
 trukie for a mon of lam *þe* heuenliche lauerd. ƿ lutlin hire

✓ If she marries
she loses her free-
dom and high
dignity.

lord for a man of clay, and lessen her ladyship, as much as her second husband is of less value and hað less possessions þan her former one had; and instead of being Gods bride and his lady daughter (for boð togeþer she is), shall become a sêrvant under a man, and his ðrall, to do all and suffer all þat he pleases, go it howsoever hard wið her; and instead of such blessed security as she was in, and still might be under Gods guardianship, he shall put

✓ her to drudgery to manage house and hinds, and to so many troubles, to care for so many ðings, to endure vexations and anger and shame near every hour, to endure so many woes, for hire so poor as þe world ever pays at þe end. Is not þis to be verily cast down? Is not þis enough slavery in place of þe frolic freedom she had while she was Sions daughter? And yet herein is mingled no mention of þe heavenly losses, þat wiðout comparison pass all oðers. Surely so goes it. Serve God, and all ðings

She must serve
God alone.

Romans viii. 28.

shall turn for þe to good. Betake þyself to him truly, and þou shalt be free from all worldly vexations, nor may any evil harm þee; for, as St. Paul says, all ðings turn to good for þe good, nor can anyðing be wanting to þee þat honourest him þat ruleð all ðings wiðin þy breast. And such sweetness shalt þou find in his love and in his service, and have so much enjoyment þereof and liking in þine heart, þat þou wilt be unwilling to change þe state þou livest in, to be a crowned queen. So gracious is our Lord, who is not willing þat his chosen ones be wiðout þeir reward here. For þere is so much comfort in his grace; þat all þat þey see, suits þem well; and þough to anoðer man it may seem þat þey suffer hardships, it grieveð þem not, but seemeð to þem soft, and þey have more delight þerein þan any oðers have in þe satisfactions of þe world. Þis our Lord giveð þem as an earnest of þe eternal reward þat shall come afterwards. Þus Gods

Joy in God.

friends have all þe enjoyment of þis world, which þey have forsaken, in a wonderful manner, and heaven in þe end. Now then, on þe oðer side, betake þyself to þe world, and þou shalt find þat, in all cases, þe more þou hast, þe more þou shalt give in exchange; and, since þou wouldest not serve God, serve this fickle and frail world; and so þou shalt be oppressed under it, as its ðrall in a þousand ways; to have in place of one satisfaction two disgusts, and to be so often made wretched by a worðless man, þat þou liest

Vexations in mar-
riage.

laflifchipe afe muchel as hire latere were if laffe wurð 7
 leffe haneð þen haneða ear hire earre. 7 of godes brude.
 7 his free dohter. for þa to eaderes ha if; bicumeð þeow
 under mon 7 his þrel to don al 7 drehen þat him likeð. ne
 fitte hit hire fe uuele. 7 of fe feli fikernesse af ha was in 7
 mahte beon under Godes warde. deð hire in to drecchunge
 to dihten hus. 7 hinen 7 to fe moni earmðen to carien for
 fe feole þing Teonen þolien 7 gromen. 7 sehomen umbe
 ftunde. Drehen fe moni wa for swa wac huire af te world worlt, B.
 forðelt eauer at ten ende. Nif þeos witerliche akast? Nis
 tis þeowdom inoh aþain þat ilke freolaic þat ha hefde hwil [Fol. 113a.]
 ha was syones dohter and tah nif imunget her nawt of þah, B.
 heouenliche luren þat passeð alle oðre wiðuten eueninge, euenunge, B.
 Sekerliche swa hit fareð. Serue Godd ane. 7 alle þinge
 schulen þe turnen to gode. And tac þe to him treoweliche. schule, B.
 7 tu schalt beo free fram alle worldliche weanen ne mei
 nan uel harmen þe. for af sente pawel seið. Alle þinge
 turneð þe gode to god. ne mai na þing wenti þe þat hereft
 him þat al welt in wið in þi breofte. And swuch swetnessfe
 þu schalt ifinden in his luue 7 in his seruise. 7 habbe fe
 muche murhðe þrof 7 likinge ipin heorte. þat tu naldes likunge, B.
 chaungen þat tu liuest in for to beo cwen ierunet. Se
 hende if ure lauerd þat nule nawt þat hife igorene beon nule he, B.
 wiðute mede her. for fe muche confort if in his grace. þat
 al ham sit þat ha feoð. and tah hit þunche oðre men þat
 ha drehen harde; hit ne greueð ham nawt ah þuncheð ham
 softe 7 habbeð mare delit þrin þen anie oðre habbeð
 ilikinge of þe worlde. þif ure lauerd giueð ham her af on
 erles of þe eche mede þat schal cume þrafter. þus hauen
 godes freond al þe fruit of þis world þat ha forsaken
 habbeð. owunderliche wife. And heuene at ten ende. Nu
 þenne on oðer half. nim þe to þe worlde 7 eauer fe þu
 mare haues fe þe schal mare trukie. 7 seruen hwen þu
 naldes godd; þis fikele world 7 frakele. 7 schalt beo fare
 iderued under hire af hire þral on a þusad wifen. Aþaines
 an likinge; habben twa of þunchunges. And fe ofte beon
 -unge, B.

under, for nought or noþing, þat þou shalt loape þy life, and repent þy condition, þat ever þou putttest þyself into such a servitude for a worldly joy which þou expectedst to secure, and (in reality) hast found þerein sorrow and misery rife. And þat which þou supposedst to be gold is turned to brass, and it is not at all such as þy people, of whom I spake above, promised thou shouldst find. Now þou seest þat þey have tricked þee as traitors; for under a shew of happiness, instead of joy þou hast often hell here, and except þou snatch þyself away, mayst expect þe future hell. Ask þese queens, þese rich countesses, þese saucy ladies, about þeir mode of life. Truly, truly, if þey rightly beþink þemselves and acknowledge the truþ, I shall have þem for witnesses þat þey are licking honey off þorns. Þey buy all þe sweetness wið two proportions of bitter, and furþer on in þis writing þat shall be openly shewn. It is by no means all gold þat glitters in þat station, þough no man knows but þemselves what often pains þem. When it is þus wið þe rich, what ðinkest þou of þe poor, þat are indifferently dowered and ill provided for, as almost all gentlewomen now are in þe world, þat have not wherewið to buy þemselves a bridegroom of þeir own rank, and give þemselves into servitude to a man of low esteem wið all þat þey have? Wellaway! Jesu! what unworþy chaffer! Well were it for þem, were þey on þe day of þeir bridal borne to be buried! Þerefore, seely maiden, forget þy people, as David biddeð. Do away þe ðoughts þat prick þy heart ðrough carnal lusts, and teach þee and edge þee on toward a suchlike servitude for fleshly filðinesses; forget also þy faðers house, as David afterwards admonishes. Þy faðer he calleð þe impure deed þat begat þee of þy moðer; idem illud carnis incendium; ardentem istum pruritum carnalis concupiscentiæ, qui opus istud odiosum præcessit, commercium istud ferinum, copulam istam impudicam, sordes istius facti putidi atque pravi. It is however in wedlock some ways to be tolerated, as men shall by and bye hear. If þou askest why God created such a ðing to be, I answer þee: God created it never such; but Adam and Eve turned it to be such by þeir sin, and marred our nature; þat is, it is þe house of immorality, and has

Ask rich ladies of their manner of life.

Undowered maidens not easily married.

He insists on his text.

Too gross and false for weak sisters.

Ita episcopus noster, quasi Montanista hæreticus, nuptias sanctissimas vituperat. Scripture interpolated. Mentiris, episcope.

imaket arm of an eðeliche mon þat tu list under. for noht
 oðer nohtunge; þat te schal laði þi lif ⁊ bireowe þat sið
 þat tu eauer dides te into swuch þeowdom for worldliche
 wunne þat tu wendes to biȝeten. ⁊ hauest ifunden weane
 þrin. ⁊ wondraðe riue. And if þat tu wendeð gold;
 iwurðen to meafþing. ⁊ nis nawt af ti folc of hwam ifpec
 þruppe bihet te to ifinden. Nu þu sefst þat ha habbeð
 itricchet te af treitres. for under weole in wunno stude þu
 hauest her ofte helle. ⁊ bute þu wið breide þe; bredeð te
 þat oder. Ake þes cwenes. þes riche cuntasses þes modie
 lafdis of hare liflade. Soðliche soðliche ȝif ha biþencheð
 ham riht ⁊ cnawlecheð soð; Jch habbe ham to witneffe
 ha lickeð huni of þornes. ha buggen al þat swete wið twa
 dale of bittre. ⁊ tat schal forðre ipis writ beon openliche
 ifcheawet. Nis hit nowet neh gold al þat ter schineð. nat
 tah na mon bute ham self hwat ham sticheð ofte. Hwen
 þus if of þe riche. hwat wenet tu of the poure þat beoð
 waeliche ȝeouen and biðet uele as gentille wimmen mest
 alle nu oworlde. þat nabbeð hwerwið buggen ham brud-
 gume onont ham ⁊ ȝeoueð ham in to þeowdom of an eðe-
 licher mon wið al þat ha habbeð. Weillawei ieshu godd
 hwuch unwurðe chaffere wel were ham weren ha on hare
 brudlakes dei iboren to biburien. for þi feli meiden forȝet ti
 folc as dauð bit. Do awei þe þohtes þat pr̃kien þin heorte
 þurh licomliche lustes. ⁊ leareð þe and eggeð toward þulli
 þeowdom for fleschliche fulðen. forȝet ec þi fader hus af
 dauð read þrafter. þi fader he cleopeð þat unþeaw þat
 freonede þe of þi moder. þat ilke unhende flesches brune.
 þat bearninde ȝeocðe of þat licomliche lust. bifore þat wlate-
 fulle werc. þat beafstliche gederinge. þat schomelese som-
 nunge. þat fulðe of fulðe stinkende ⁊ untohe dede. Hit
 if tah in wedlac summes weis to þolien af men schal after
 iheren ȝif þu akes hwi godd schop swuch þing to beon.
 Jch þe onswerie. Godd ne schop hit neauer swuch. Ah
 Adam ⁊ eue turnden hit to beo swuch þurh hare sunne. ⁊
 merden ure cunde. þat if tis unþeawes hus. ⁊ haueð mare

earn, B.

[Fol. 114b.]

wendest, B.

wontreðe, B.

meastlung, B.

[Fol. 114c.]

wenest, B.

wummon, B.

leadieð, B.

ȝeohðe, B.

[Fol. 114d.]

me, B.

beonne, B.

tis B. omits.

be more harm in it. Pere is all too much lordliness
 and mastery perein, in his nature þus marred, which
 David þus called þy faders house, þat is, þe lust of
 lechery þat ruleð perein. Forget, and go out of it wið a
 Gods grace to hearty will, and God will, after þat will, give þee a strengð
 subdue lust. assuredly from his dear grace. Pere needs not but þat þou
 will and let God work. Have trust in his help. Þou
 shalt beseech him for noþing good, nor begin anyðing þat
 he will not end it. Ever await his grace, and overcome
 wið help of it þat same weak nature þat draweð into ser-
 vitude and casteð so many into miry filð. Et concupiscet,
 A spiritual bride- etc. And þen will, saið David, þe king desire þy beauty;
 groom. þe king of all kings will desire þee for his leman; and þen
 þou, seely maiden, þat art allotted to him wið þe grace of
 maidenhood, break not þou þat seal þat sealeð you togeðer.
 Retain þy name by which þou art wedded to him, nor ever
 quit for a lust and for a trumpery delight of a moment þat
 same ðing þat may never be recovered. Maidenhood is a
 treasure þat, if it be once lost, will never again be found.
 A Lost maidenhood irrecoverable. Maidenhood is þe bloom þat, if it be once foully plucked,
 never again sprouteð up; but pough it wiðer some time
 It sometimes loses some of its beauty by evil thoughts; wið various ðoughts, it never may grow after þat. Maid-
 enhood is þe star þat if it be once gone out of þe east
 adown to þe west, never again ariseð. Maidenhood is a
 but once lost is grace granted þee from heaven; if ever þou put it away
 never found. once, never shalt þou recover such anoðer, for maidenhood
 is queen of heaven and þe faið of þe world, by which we
 Some transcen- are protected. Tis a virtue above all virtues, and to Christ
 dental doctrine. þe most acceptable of all. Whence þou hast, maiden, ever
 preciously to guard it; for it is so high a ðing and so
 very dear to God, and so acceptable. Hence it is a loss
 þat is beyond recovery. If it is dear to God, þat is, so like
 himself, no wonder: for he is þe loveliest ðing, and wið-
 out every breach, and was ever, and is, pure beyond all
 ðings, and loveð purity beyond all ðings. And what is a
 more lovesome ðing and more to be extolled among earðly
 ðings þan þe virtue of maidenhood? Wiðout breach and
 High flying no- pure, taken from himself, who makeð out of an earðly
 tions.

harm if al to muchel lauorddom ⁊ meistris þinne þis cunde muche, B.
 imerred tuf þat dō clepeð þus ti faderes hus. þat if te lust
 of lecherie þat rixleð þer wið inne. forþet ⁊ ga ut þrof
 wið wil of þin heorte. ⁊ eodd wile after þe wil þeoue þe
 strengþe sikerliche of his deore grace. ne þarf þe þute wilnen
 ⁊ lete eodd wurchen. Hauē trust on his help. ne schal tu
 na þing godes biſechen ne bigunnen. þat he hit nule enden lunien, B. for
bigunnen.
[Fol. 115a.]
 eauer bide his grace. ⁊ ouerkum wið hire help þat ilke bidde, B.
þe, B.
 wake cunde þat draheð into þeowdom ⁊ into fulðe ſen-
 niliche akaſteð ſe monie. At concupiſcet rex decorem
 tu[um]. Ant þenne wile ſeið dō þe king wilni þi wlite.
 þe king of alle kinges deſire þe to leofmon. ⁊ þu þenne
 ſeli meiden þat art ilote to him wið meidenhades menſke. iloten, B.
 ne brec þu nawt tat ſeil þat ſeiled inc to eaderes. hald ti
 nome þurh hwam þu art to him iweddēt. ne leaſ þu neauer
 for a luſt ⁊ for an eðelich delit of an hond hwile þat ilke
 þing þat ne mei neuer beon acouered. Meidenhad if trefor þe, B.
 þat beo hit eaneſ forloren. ne beð hit neauer ifunden.
 Meidenhad is te bloſme. þat beo ha eanes fulliche forcoruen.
 ne ſpruteð ha neauer eſt. Ah þah ha ſalewi ſum chere
 mid miſliche þohtes. Ha mei eſt greuen neauer þe latere. [Fol. 115b.]
þonkes, B.
 Meidenhad if te ſteorre þat beo ha eanes of þe eaſt igan
 adun to þe weſt. neauer eſt ne ariſeð ha. Meidenhad if iþe, B.
 tat an þeoue iſettēt te of heouene. do þu hit eaneſ awei. ne
 ſchal tu neauer nan oðer al ſwuch acoueren for meidenhad
 if heuene cwen ⁊ worldes alefneſſe þurh hwan þe beon alefendneſſe, B.
 iburhen. mihte ouer alle mihtes ⁊ owemeſt criſt of alle. for
 þi þu a heſt meiden ſe deorewurdliche to witen hit. for hit
 if ſe heh þing ⁊ ſe ſwiðe leof godd ⁊ ſe licwurðe. forþi
 hit if an lure þat if wiðute coueringe. þiſ hit if godd leof
 þat if him ſelf ſwa ilich. hit nis na wunder for he if leof-
 lukeſt þing. ⁊ wiðuten eauer euch bruche ⁊ weſ eauer ⁊ buten, B.
þinge, B.
 if cleane ouer alle þing. ⁊ ouer alle þing lueð cleanneſſe.
 And hwat is luſſumre þing ⁊ mare to herien biamong eorð-
 liche þinges þen þe mihte of meidenhad bute bruche and [Fol. 115c.]
þing, B.
 cleane ibroiden on himſeluen. þat makeð of eorðlich mon

man or woman a heavenly angel, out of a lowly one an exalted one, out of a foe a friend, a help out of what harmeð. Our flesh is our foe, and debases and harmeð us as it defileð us. But if it keep itself wiðout offence, pure, it is our very good friend and help, out of true service; for in it and ðrough it þou earnest, maiden, to be equal to angels in þe high bliss of heaven, and in þe presence of God justified, in case þou ledest þeir life in þe frail flesh wiðout frailty. An angel and a maiden are equal in virtue of maidenhoods excellence, þough in blessedness þey are yet separate and divided. And þough þe maidenhood of þem be þe more blessed now, þine it demands þe more strengð to preserve, and it shall be requited wið a higher reward. Þis virtue is þe only one þat in þis mortal life sheweð in its estate of þe bliss immortal in þe blessed land, where bride takeð not bridegroom, nor bridegroom bride, and which teacheð here on earð, in its mode of life, þe lifeleading of heaven; and in þis world, which is called a land of unlikeness, maintaineð her conduct in þe likeness of þe heavenly nature, þough she be an outlaw þerefrom, and in a frame of clay and in a body of a beast, almost lives as a heavenly angel. Is not þis virtue much to be extolled by all? Þis is besides þe virtue þat holds our frail vessel, þat is our feeble flesh, as St. Paul teaches, in entire holiness. And as þe sweet unguent and expensive beyond oðers, which is yclept balm, preserves þe dead carcass which is þerewið rubbed from rotting, so doð maidenhood a maidens living flesh, maintain wiðout stain all her limbs and her senses, her sight and hearing, her taste and smelling, and every limbs feeling; so þat þey spoil not, nor melt away þrough carnal lusts in þe filð of þe flesh. So þat God hað þrough his grace granted so much love, þat þey be not like þem of whom it is written by þe profet þat þey in þeir filð rotted like boars. Þat is to say, every woman þat is her husbands slave, and liveð in filð, he and she boð. But it is not said of þese þat þey rot þerein if þey lawfully hold to þeir wedlock. But þe same sorry wretches þat, unwedded, wallow in þe same foul mire, are þe devils boars, who rides þem and spurs þem to do all þat he will. Þese wallow in mire, and rot away þerein, till þey arise þrough

Our flesh may be
our friend.

A maiden as good
as an angel.

Purity the only
heavenly virtue.

Maidenhood is
balm.

No scripture war-
rant to disparage
wedlock.

It is libertines
who do wrong.

7 wummon. heouene engel. of heane. hine. of fa freond.
 help. of þatte harmeð. Vre flesch if ure fa. 7 heaneð uf
 7 harmeð se ofte af ha uf fuleð. Ah 7if þat ha wit hire
 wiðute bruche cleane. ha if uf fwiðe god freond 7 help of
 treowe hure. for in hire 7 þurh hire þu of earnest meiden
 to beo engle euening ipe heje blisse of heuene. 7 wið God on epple, B.
 rihte hwen þu hare liflade ipi bruchele flesch wiðute bruche bute, B.
 leadeft. engel 7 meiden beon euening in uertu of meiden- inuertu i, B.
 hades mihte þah eadineffe ha twinni 7ette 7 to tweane.
 And tah hare meidenhad beo eadiure nuðe. þin if te mare
 strengþe to halden. 7 schal wið mare mede beon þe for-
 7ulden. þis mihte if þat an þat ipis deadlich lif scheapeð
 in hire estat of þe blisse undeadlich ipat eadi lond af brud
 ne nimeð gume. ne brudgume bruide. 7 techeð her on
 eorðe in hire liflade þe liflade of heuene. 7 ipis world þat
 if icleopet lond of unlicneffe athalt hire burðe ilicneffe of
 heuenliche cunde þah ha beo utlahe þrof 7 in licome of
 lam 7 in beaftes bodi neh lineð heuenlich engel. Nif tif
 mihte of alle fwiðe to herien. þis if 7et þe uertu þat halt
 ure bruchele feat þat if ure feble flesch as sente pawel
 leareð in hal halineffe. And af tat fwote smirles 7 deorest
 of oðre þat if icleopet basme. wit þat deade licome þat if
 ter wið ismittet from rotunge. alþwa deð meidenhad
 meidenef cwike flesch wiðute wemmunge halt alle hire
 limen 7 hire fif wittes. sihðe 7 heringe. smecchunge 7 smeal-
 lunge 7 euch limes felunge. þat ha ne merren ne formeal
 ten þurh licomliche lustes i flesches fulðe þat godd haueð
 þurh his grace se mucche luue vnneð þat ha ne beoð of þa
 iliche bi hwam hit if iwwiten þus þurh þe prophete þat ha
 in hare wurðunge as eaueres forroteden. þat if eauer euch
 wif þat if hire were þral 7 lineð iwurðinge he 7 hoe
 baðe. Ah nif hit nawt bi þeose iseid þat ha forrotieð
 þrin 7if ha hare wedlac laheliche halden. Ah þa ilke fari
 wrecches þat ipat ilke fule wurðinge unweddede walewið.
 beoð þe deueles eaueres þat rit ham 7 spureð ham to don
 al þat he wile. þeos walewið in wurðinge 7 forroteð þrin
 deadliche, B.
 [Fol. 115a.]
 brude, B.
 heouenlich, B.
 ilicome, B.
 ismiret, B.
 fleschliche, B.
 [Fol. 116a.]
 iunnen, B.
 haldeð, B.
 þe ipe, B.
 forrotieð, B.

repentance, and heal þemselves by a true shrift and by amends made. Blessed maiden! understand in how high dignity þe virtue of maidenhood holds þee. But þe higher þou standest, þe more sorely be afraid to fall from so high a degree, as þe fall is so much þe worse. þe spiteful devil has his eyes on þee, so high mounted up towards heaven þrough maidenhoods power, which to him is þe most odious of virtues; for þrough our Ladys maidenhood, who began it first, þe maiden Mary, he lost þe dominion over mankind on earþ, and þus also hell was robbed of its prey, and heaven will be filled. She sees þee follow her steps; maiden, do as she did, who offered her maidenhood first to our Lord, when he chose her among all women to be his moþer, and by her maidenhood redeem all mankind. Now þe old fiend beholdeþ þee, and seeþ þee stand in þis virtue so high, like to her, and her Son too, as an angel in heaven in maidenhoods grace; and he swelleþ wiþ rage, and shooteþ night and day his arrows, dipt in a venomous unguent, toward þy heart, to wound þee wiþ weakness of will, and make þee to fall, as Christ forbad þee to do. And ever as þou standest stronglier against him, so out of vexation and rage he þe madlier warred; for þe more odious it seems to him to be overcome: þat a þing so feeble as flesh is, and especially þat of women, shall overpass him. Every will of þe flesh, and every lust of lechery þat ariseþ in þy heart is þe fiends arrow. But it woundeþ not except it fasten on þee, and remain so long þat þou wish þat þy will were carried into execution. While þy intellect stands firm, and chastiseþ þy will, so þat þy lust bear þee not to what would be agreeable to þee, it harmeþ þee not, nor soileþ þy soul, for intellect is her shield, under Gods grace. While þe shield is hole, þat is, þe wisdom of þy wit, so þat it break not nor bend, þough þy fleshly will be under it false; and do as it please, þe fiends arrows fly away again upon himself. And observe for what reason: our bodys lust is þe fiends fosterchild; our intellect is Gods daughter, and boþ are wiþin us; hence, þere is a conflict, and needs must be always, for þey cease never more, while here wed well, to war one wiþ oþer. But 'tis well wiþ him, who followeþ wit, God's daughter, for

The devil would cast maidens from their high state.

Mary the virgin.

The devil beholds thee with rage.

Does not like to be defeated by a woman.

Reason Gods messenger.

a þat ha arifen þurh birewsunge ⁊ healen ham wið seð
 schrift ⁊ wið deadbote. Eadi meiden *underfond* in hu
 heh dignete þe mihte of meidenhad halt te. Ah se þu
 herre stondeſt. beo farre offearet to fallen for se herre degre.
 ſe þe ſaþ is wurfe. þe ondfule deuēl bihalt te ſe hehe [Fol. 116a.]
 iſſihen toward heuene þurh meidenhades mihte þat him iſ
 iſtihe, B.
 mihte ladeſt for þurh ure lafdi meidenhad þat hit bigon þe, B.
 earſt þe meiden marie. he forleas te lauerddom on moncun
 on eorðe. ⁊ weſ helle irobbed ⁊ heuene beð ifulled. He
 ſeð þe folhen hire treoden. meiden ean aſ heo dude þat þe, B.
 offrede hire meidenhad earſt to ure lauerd for hwen þat he
 rneas hire biamong alle wimmen for to beon his moder. ⁊
 þurh hire meidenhad moncun aleſen. nu bihalt te alde
 feond ⁊ ſeoð þe in þiſ mihte ſtonden ſe hehe ilich hire. ⁊
 hire ſune aſ engel in heuene in meidenhades menſke. ⁊ to
 ſwolled of grome. ⁊ ſchoteð niht ⁊ dai hiſe earewen his, B.
 idrencte of an attri haliwei toward tin heorte to wundi þe
 wið was wil ⁊ makien to fallen aſ criſt te forbede. And [Fol. 116a.]
 eauer ſe þu ſtrongluker ſtondeſt aȝain him. ſe he o tene ⁊
 ogrome wodeluker weorreð. for ſwa muchel þe hokerlucher
 him puncheð to beon ouercumen þat þing ſe feble aſ fleſch
 iſ. ⁊ nomelihe of wummon; ſchal him ouerſtiken. Euch
 fleſcheſ wil ⁊ luſt of lecherie þat ariſeð ipin herte; iſ þe fleſchlich, B.
 feondes flan. Ah hit ne wundeð þe nawt bute hit feſtni
 fla, B.
 oþe. ⁊ leaue ſe longe þat tu waldeſt þat ti wil were ibroht
 to werke. Hwil þi wit aſtond ⁊ chaiſteð þi wil. þat ti
 edſtent, B.
 luſt ne beore þe to þat te leſ were; ne harmeð hit te
 nawiht. ne ſuleð þi ſawle for wit iſ hire ſcheld under
 godeſ grace. Hwil þe ſcheld iſ hal þat iſ te wiſdom of þi
 wit. þat hit ne breke ne beie. þah þi fleſchliche wil falſ beo
 þer under ⁊ walde aſ hire luſte; þe feondeſ flan fleoð awei þe, B.
 aȝain on him ſeluen. And loke hwarfore. vre licomes luſt [Fol. 116a.]
 iſ te feondes foſter. vre wit iſ godes dohter ⁊ baðe beoð
 þe, B.
 uſ inwið. for þi þer iſ a feht. ⁊ mot beon aſ nede for ne
 trukeð neauer mare hwil we here wunieð weorre ham
 biwunen. Ah wel iſ him þat folheð wit godeſ dohter. for

she holds wið maidenhood þat is her sister. But on þe
 Lechery against oðer side, þy will, out of carnal lust, holdeð wið lechery,
 reason. which is þe devils offspring, as she is, as sin is her moðer.

• Lechery makes war on maidenhood wið þe help of þe
 fleshly will, and warreð in þis wise. Her first support is
 The lechery of sight; if þou gazest often intently upon any man, lechery
 the eyes. anon prepares herself to make war on þy virginity, and
 Of conversation. first peers upon it face to face. Speech is her second help.
 If afterwards ye talk togeðer in an idle way, and speak of
 unprofitable matters, lechery saið, "Shew me þe grace of þy
 maidenhood," and draws it towards mischief, and þreatens
 to do it shame and harm afterwards. And she keeps her
 Of kisses. promise, for soon þe kiss comeð, þat is her ðird support;
 þen lechery, to shame and to disgrace, spits in maiden-
 hoods face. þe fourð support towards ruining maiden-
 Of romping. hood is improper handling. Guard her, þen. For if ye þen
 put hands in any place improperly, þen lechery smiteð on
 þe virtue of maidenhood, and woundeð it sore: at last it
 Then is virginity lost. giveð þat dreary deed, þat dint of deað. Wellaway! for
 þat rueful work. Never doð maidenhood come alive again
 after þat wound. Whosoever þat should þen see how þe
 The angels dis- angels are fluttered, who see þeir sister so sorrowfully
 turbed, the devils dance. fallen, and how þe devils hop and laugh aloud, and beat
 þeir hands togeðer, stony were his heart if it melted not
 in tears. Ware þee, seely maiden. It is said þat oppor-
 tunity makes þe ðief. Flee from and carefully avoid all
 þings of which þis irremediable loss may arise; þat is, first
 Avoid opportu- of all, þe place and þe time, þat might induce þee to do
 nity. amiss. Against oðer immoralities men may fight standing.
 But against lechery, þou must turn þe back, if þou wilt
 Flee. overcome, and fight by retreating. And in truð if þou
 þinkest and lookest up towards þe great reward þat
 awaiteð maidenhood, þou wilt pass lightly by, and blipely
 endure þe damage þat þou sufferest as regards þy fleshly
 will, and carnal lust, which þou restrainest here, and in a
 while wilt leave, for bliss þat comeð þerefrom, wiþout any
 ending. And what is þe bliss? Lo, God himself saið þrough
 þe profet, "þey þat have cast off from þem þe lusts of þe
 flesh and keep my sabbað," þat is to say, keep þem resting

ha halt wið meidenhad þat if hire fuster. Ah þi wil on
 oðer half of þat licomliche lust halt wið leccherie. þat if
 þe deoueles streon af heo if. ⁊ funne hire moder. Leccherie
 o meidenhad wið help of fleschliche wil; weorreð o þif
 wife. Hire forme fulst if sihðe. ȝif þu bihaldest ofte stike-
 linde on eni mon; leccherie ananriht greiðeð hire wið þat
 to weorren oþi meidenhad. ⁊ secheð earst upon hire nebbe
 to nebbe. Speche if hire oðer help. ȝif ȝe þrafter þenne
 speken toedere folliche. ⁊ talkeð of unnet. leccherie seið
 scho me þe menske of þi meidenhad. ⁊ tukeð hire al to
 wundre ⁊ þreat to don hire schome. ⁊ harmen þrafter. ⁊
 hald hire foreward. for sone se cos cumeð forð þat if hire
 þridde fulst; þenne spit leccherie to schome ⁊ to biðmere
 meidenhad oþe nebbe. þe feorðe fulst to merre meidenhad
 þat if unhende selunge. wite hire þenne. for ȝif ȝe þenne
 hondlen ow in ani stude untoheliche. þenne smit leccherie
 oþe mihte of meidenhad ⁊ wundeð hire sare. þat dreori
 dede on ende ȝineð þat deaðes dunt. Weila þat reowðe.
 ne acwikeð neauer meidenhad after þat wunde. Hwa þat
 sehe þenne hu þe engles beoð ifweamed þat seoð hare
 fuster swa sorhfulliche afallet. And te deoueles hoppen ⁊
 kenchine beaten hondes to gederes; stani were his heorte
 ȝif ha ne mealte iteares. Wite þe feli meiden. Man seið
 þat eise makeð þeof. fleh alle thinges ⁊ forbuh ȝeorne þat
 tus unboteliche lure of mahe arisen. þat if on alre earst þe
 stude ⁊ te time þat mahten bringe þe on mis for to donne.
 Wið oðre unþeawes men mai stondinde sehten. Ah ȝain
 leccherie þu most turne þe rug ȝif þu wult ouercumen ⁊
 wið fluht sehten. And soðes ȝif þu þenches ⁊ bihaldest on
 heh to ward te muchele mede þat meidenhad abideð; þu
 wult lete lehtliche. ⁊ abeore bliðeliche þe derf þat tu
 drehest onont ti fleschliche wil ⁊ ti licomes lust þat tu
 forbereð her. ⁊ ane hwile leauest for blisse þat cumeð þrof
 wiðuten ani ende. And hwuch is te blisse; low godd
 himself seið þurh þe prophete. þeo þat habbið fram ham
 icoruen flesches lustes ⁊ haldeð mine sabaz þat if halden

stikelunge, B.

[Fol. 117a.]

hondlið, B.

Wei þe, B.

þe, B.

[Fol. 117b.]
Me, B.

þenchest, B.

þe, B.

þe, B.

forcoruen, B.

Isaiah lvi. 5.

Dwells on the
text, interpreting
it of the after
life.

Turns it to maid-
ens.

Rev. xiv. 9.

An insight into
heaven.

What song in
heaven treats of.

Matt. xix. 12.

Distinction be-
tween duties of
obligation and
that which is
more expedient.

from fleshly work and hold to my covenant, "I promise þem," he saið, "to give þem in my kingdom a place and a name better þan of sons and of daughters." Who could wish for more? Who can þink of þe weal, þe joy and þe bliss, þe exalted nature of þe reward, which þese same few words comprehend? "I will," he saið, "give þem a place and a name better þan of sons and of daughters." Such is his promise, and it is as þough it were promised þem to sing wið angels, whose fellows þey are, by þeir heavenly mode of life, þough as yet here þey dwell in þe flesh on earð. To sing þat sweet song and þat heavenly music, especially merry, which no saints may sing, but maidens only, in heaven: and to follow God Almighty, full of every good, whiðersoever he turneð, as þe oðers must not, þough þey all be his sons and his daughters. Nor do any of þe oðers wear crowns, nor can þeir beauty, nor can þeir vestments compare to þeirs, þe maidens, so immeasurably bright þey be, and sheen to look on. And what shall be þeir song, þeirs alone, and þeir progress after God, whiðersoever he turneð? and þeir condition so fair beyond all oðers? Understand and take heed. All þeir song in heaven is to þank God for his grace and goodness. Þe wedded þank him þat when þey would have fallen at once utterly downwards, þey fell not utterly (so) down, for wedlock preserved þem, þat same law which God hað established for þe unstrong. For well our Lord knew þat all could not maintain þemselves in þe height of þe grace of maidenhood: but he said when he spake þereof, "Not all," quoð he, "receive þis word. Whosoever can receive it, let him receive it, I counsel him," quoð he. What God commands is one þing, what he counsels is anoðer. What þings he commands þem a man must needs keep, if he will be saved, and þey are common alike to all men alive: his counsels are of high matters, and are to his dearest friends, which are vile in þis world and hard to fulfil, þough light to all who have a due love towards him and a true faið. But whosoever keepeð þese counsels, earneð a measure of heavenly reward filled overfull and running over. Such is þe counsel

ham ireste from þat fleschliche werc. ⁊ halden me foreward; [Fol. 117c.]
Jeh behate ham he seið imi kineriche to ȝiuen ham stude haldeð, B.
⁊ betere nome þen sunen ⁊ dohtren. Hwa mihte wilni
mare; Eunuchus qui seruauerit sabbata mea &c. Hwa mei
þence þe weole. þe winne ⁊ te blisse þe hehscipe of þe
mede þat tis ilke lut wordes bicluppen abuten Ichulle he becluppeð, B.
seið ȝeouen ham stude ⁊ nome betere þen sunen ⁊ dohtren.
þulli biheafte ⁊ hit if ilich þat þat ham if bihaten to
fingen wið engles hwaf felahes ha beoð þurh liflade of
heuene. þat ȝet þer he wuneð fleschliche on eorðe to finge þe, B.
þat swote song ⁊ þat englene dream ut nume murie þat
nane halwes ne mahen bute meidenes ane fingen in heuene. nan habbe ne
⁊ folhen godd almihti euch godes ful hwider se he eauer mei, B.
wendeð af þe oðre ne mahen nawt þah ha beon alle hife his, B.
funnen ⁊ alle hife dehtren. Ne nan of þe oðres crunen ne
hare wlite. ne hare weden ne mahen euenes to hare se unimete [Fol. 117d.]
brihte ha beoð ⁊ sehene to biseon on. And hwat bið hare
anes song. ⁊ after godd hare anes gong. hwider se he eauer
turneð? and hare fare so seire beforen alle oðre? ȝong, B.
Vnder- stond ⁊ nim ȝeme. Al hare song in heuene if for to þonki
godd of his grace ⁊ of his goddede. þe iweddede þonken herien, B.
him þat ha lanhure hwen ha alles walden fallen duneward; þonkið, B.
ne fellen nawt wið alle adun for wedlac ham ikepte þat
ilke lahe þat godd haueð istald for þe unstronge. for wel
wiste ure lauord þat alle ne mihten nawt halden iþe hehe
of meidenhades mihte. ah seide þa he spec þrof Non omnes
capiunt hoc uerbum Ne underneomeð nawt quoð he þis underuoð, B.
ilke word alle. Qui potest capere capiat. Hwase hit me
underneomen; underneome ich reade qð he. Oðer if þat
godd hat; ⁊ oðer if tat he reades. þa ilke þinges þat he
hat; þeo mot mon nede halden þat wile beon iburhen. ⁊ reat, B.
þeo beon to alle men oliue iliche meane. his reades beoð of [Fol. 118a.]
hah þing. ⁊ to hife leouest friend þe lut iþis worlde. ⁊
derue beoð to fullen ⁊ lihte þah hwase haueð riht lune to
him ⁊ treowe bileaue. Ah hwase halt þa; he earneð him
ouerfullet ful ⁊ ouereorninde met of heuenliche mede.

Maidenhood not of maidenhood, which God commandeð not, but counsels. Whosoever will be one of þe troop of his dearest friends, and as it were his darling, let him do his counsel and earn himself crown upon crown. So Saint Paul giveð counsel to maidens to be as he was, and saið þat it is well for þem who so can keep þemselves: nor does he order it any oðerwise. For always as aught is more precious, it is harder to preserve. And if it were commanded and yet not observed, þe breach would be deadly sin. Hence was wedlock legalised in holy church as a bed for þe sick, to sustain þe unstrong, so þat noþing can stand in þe high hill so near to heaven as þe virtue of maidenhood. Þis, þen, is þe song of þem who are in þe law of wedlock, to þank God and glorify him, for þat he at once prepared þem, when þey fell short of maidenhoods elevation, to alight in such a place þat þey were not hurt, þough þey were brought lower, and þat whatsoever in þat got hurt þey should heal wið almsdeeds. Þis, þen, þe wedded sing, þat þrough Gods goodness and mercy of his grace, þough þey have driven downwards, þey halt in wedlock and softly alight in þe bed of its law, for whosoever falleð out of the grace of maidenhood so þat þe curtained bed of wedlock hold þem not, drive down to þe earð so terribly þat þey are dashed limb from limb: boð joint and muscle. Þese shall never sing a song in heaven, but shall sing þe song of þe lamenter evermore in hell, except repentance raise þem to life, and þey heal þemselves wið true shrift and repentance, for if þey are in þe circle of þe widowed, and must in þe circle of þe widowed sing before þe wedded in heaven, þis þen is þeir song to glorify þeir lord, and þank him heartily þat his power kept þem chaste in purity, þat þey had tried þe filð of þe flesh, and þat he had granted þem in þis world to amend þeir sins. Sweet are þese songs. But þe maidens song is altogeðer unlike þese, being common to þem wið angels. Music beyond all music in heaven. In þeir circle is God himself; and his dear moðer, þe precious maiden, is hidden in þat blessed company of gleaming maidens: nor may any but þey dance and sing, for þat is ever þeir song, to þank God and glorify him þat he gave þem so much grace from himself, þat for him þey renounced every earðly

Maidenhood not a command, but a recommendation.

1 Cor. vii. 26.

Wedlock lawful for the weak.

Wedlock less spiritual than maidenhood.

Song of praise by the wedded.

Fornicators.

Song of the widowed.

Song of the maidens.

Swuch if meidenhades read *þat* godd ne hat nawt; ah read. Hwuch se wile beon of þe lut of his leoueste freond
 ⁊ af his deore derling; don his read ⁊ earnin him crune
 upo crune. Alſwa ſente pawel ȝineð read to meidenes. to þe meidenes
beoð, B.
 beon as he was. ⁊ seið *þat* wel if ham *þat* ſwa ham mahen
 halden. ne hat he hit nan oðref weis. for eauer ſe deore oþer, B.
 þing. ſe if derure to biwitene. And ȝif hit were ihaten ⁊
 nawt ta ihalden; þe bruche were deadliche funne. for þi was [Fol. 118b.]
 wedlac ilahet in hali chirche af bed to ſeke. to ihente þe
 unſtronge. *þat* ne mahten nawt ſtonden in þe hehe hul ⁊ ſe þe ne mahen, B.
 neh heuene af meidenhades mihte. Þiſ if tenne hare ſong þenne, B.
þat beon ilahe of wedlac. þonki godd ⁊ herien *þat* he
 greiðede ham lanhure þa ha walden of meidenes hehſcipe.
 a ſwuch ſtude in to lihten *þat* ha neren nawt ihurt þah ha
 weren ilahet. And hwat ſe ha þrin hurten ham; wið
 ealmes deden healden. Þis ſingeð þenne iweddede. *þat* ha
 þurh godes milce ⁊ merci of his grace þa ha driuen dune-
 ward; i wedlac at ſtutten. ⁊ in þe bed of his lahe ſofteliche
 lihten. for hwaſe ſwa falleð of meidenhedef menſke *þat*
 wedlakef heueld bed nawt ham ne ihente; ſe ferliche ha heucl, B.
 driuen dun to þe eorðe *þat* al ham if tolimet lið ba ⁊ lire.
 þeos ne ſchulen neauer ſong ſingen in heuene ah ſchulen
 weimeres leod ai mare in helle. bute ȝif bireowſinge areare [Fol. 118c.]
 ham to liue. ⁊ heale ham wið ſoð ſchrift ⁊ wið deadbote.
 for ȝif ha beoð iwidewene ring. ⁊ ſchulen iwidewene ring acwiket & ima-
ket hale: ha
beoð, B. adds.
 biſore þe iweddede ſingen in heuene *þat* if tenne hare ſong
 ⁊ herien hare drihtin ⁊ þonken him ȝeorne *þat* his mihte
^{held} ham icleanſchipe chaſte after *þa*tha heſden ifondet fleſchef
 fulðe. ⁊ ȝettede ham iwif world to bete hare funnen. Swote beten, B.
 beoð þeos ſongef. Ah al if meidenes ſong unlich þeoſe wið
 englef imeane. dream ouer al þe dreameſ in heuene. Jn
 heore ring þer if godd ſelf ⁊ his deore moder þe deore-
 wurðe meiden þe heuenliche cwen leat i *þat* eadi trume of
 ſchimerinde meidenes. ne moten nane bute heo hoppen ne buten, B.
 ſingen. for *þat* if ai hare ſong þonken godd ⁊ herien *þat* he a & B., and so
below.
 on ham ſe muche grace ȝef of him ſeluen *þat* ha forſoken

man and kept þemselves clean ever from carnal defilements in body and in breast: and instead of a man of clay took þe lord of life, þe king of þe high blisse, whence he sheweð þem grace before all oðers, as þe bridegroom doð his wedded spouse. Þis song none but þey may sing. All, as I before

Maidens follow
Christ in heaven.
Rev. xiv. 4.

said, follow our Lord, and yet none entirely so: for in þe grace of maidenhood and in its virtue, none may follow him, nor þe blessed maiden, þe lady of angels, and grace of maidens, but maidens only. And hence is þeir attire so bright and sheen beyond all oðers, þat þey always go next to God whiðersoever he turneð. And þey all are crowned and rewarded in heaven wið champions crowns. But maidens have beyond þat which is common to all alike, a

Maidens auriolæ.

diadem shining sheener þan þe sun. Aureola it is called in þe Latin language. It is not for human speech to tell of þe like of þe flowers þat are drawn þereon, nor of þe gemstones þerein. So many privileges shew full plainly who are þe maidens, and separate þem from the oðers wið so many graces, world wiðout end. Of þese þree sorts, maidenhood and widowhood, and þirdly, wedlockhood, þou mayst know by þe degrees of þeir blisse, which and by how much it surpasses þe oðers. For wedlock has its fruit

Maidenhood re-
warded a hun-
dredfold.

þirtyfold in heaven, widowhood sixtyfold; maidenhood wið a hundredfold overpasses boð. Consider, þen, hereby, who-soever from her maidenhood descendeð into wedlock, by how many degrees she falleð downward. She is a hundred degrees elevated towards heaven, while she holds to maidenhood, as þe reward proveð, and she leapeð into wedlock þat is downward to þe þirtieð over þree twenties and yet more by ten ($60+10=70$). Is not þat a big leap downward at one turn? And yet it must be endured. And God hað made it low, as I before said, lest any one should leap: and þen at once be not what belongs to him, and should dive down headlong, wiðout regard, deep into hell. Of such as þese we are not to speak, for þey be scratched out of þe book of life in heaven. But observe more ex-

Wedlock lower in
grace.

Sorrows of wed-
lock.

actly, as we before bad, what þe wedded suffer, þat þou mayst know þereby how merry þou mayst live, a maiden

for him euch eorðlich mon 7 helden ham cleane ai fra
 fleſchliche fulðen ibodi 7 ibreoſte. 7 i ſtude of mon of lam;
 token liues lauerd þe king of þe hehe bliſſe. for hwi he
 menſkeð ham ſe muchel biſforen alle þe oðre. as te brud-
 gume deð hiſ weddede ſpuse. þiſ ſong ne mahen nane bute
 heo ſingen. Alle aſ ich ſeide ear folhen ure lauerd. 7 tah
 nawt ouer al. for iþe menſke of meiden had 7 in hire mihte
 ne mahe nane folhen him. ne þat eadi meiden englene laſdi
 7 meidenef menſke. bute meidenef menſke,¹ bute meidenef
 ane. And for þi iſ hare aturn ſe briht 7 ſe ſchene biſforen
 alle oðre þat ha eað eaueſ neſt godd hwiderſe he turneð.
 And alle ha beoð icruned þat bliſſed in heuene wið kem-
 pene crune. Ah þe meidenef habben upo þat. þat iſ to
 alle iliche imeane a gerlaundſche ſchinende ſchenre þen þe
 funne. Auriole ihaten olatineſ ledene. þe flurſ þat beoð
 idrahe þron. ne þe ʒimſtanes þrin to tellen of hare euene ne
 iſ na monneſ ſpeche. þuſ feole priuilegeſ ſcheaweð ful
 futelliche hwucche beon þe meidneſ 7 fundreð ham fram
 þe oðre wið þuſ feole menſken world buten ende. Of þeas
 þre had meidenhad 7 widewehad 7 te þridde wedlached
 þu maht bi þe degrez of hare bliſſe icnawen hwuch 7 bi
 hu muchel þe an paſſed þe oðre. for wedlac haueð hire
 frut þrittifald in heuene. widewehad; fixti fald. Maiden-
 had wið hundred fald ouer eað baðe. loke þenne her bi
 hwa ſe of hire maidenhad lihteð in to wedlac; bi hu moni
 degrez ha falleð duneward. Ha iſ an hundred degrez
 ihehet toward heuene hwil ha meidenhad halt aſ þat frut
 preoueð 7 leapeð in to wedlac þat iſ duneward to þe dun neoðer, B.
 þrittuðe ouer þrie twenti 7 ʒet ma bi tene. niſ þat at an
 chere a mucho lupe duneward. 7 tah hit iſ to polien. And
 godd haueð ilahed hit aſ ich ear ſeide. leſte hwa ſe leope.
 7 tenne lahere nawt nere hwat kep to him 7 driue adun
 ſwireforð wiðuten ikepunge deope in to helle. Of þeas
 niſ nawt to ſpeken for ha beoð iſcrepte ut of liues writ in
 heuene. ¶ Ah ſcheawe witerluker aſ þe ear biheten hwat
 drehen þe iweddede þat tu icnawe þerbi hu murie þu maht

[Fol. 118a.]

buten, B.
folhit, B.¹ So in MS.

þeo þe, B.

[Fol. 119a.]

niſ, B.

[Fol. 119b.]

in þy maidenhood, beyond what þey live, in addition to þe mirð and grace in heaven which mouð cannot name. Now þou art wedded and from so high estate alighted so low : from being in likeness of angels, from being Jesus Christs leman, from being a lady in heaven (fallen) into þe filð of þe flesh, into þe manner of life of a beast, [Bona verba, katafryx], into þe thralldom of a man, and into þe sorrows of þe world. Yea now ! what fruit has it and for what purpose chiefly is it ? All for þat, or partly for þat. Be

Its thralldom. now well assured, to cool þy lust wið filð of þi body, to have delight of þy fleshly will from mans intercourse, before God it is a nauseous þing to ðink þereon, and to speak þereof is yet more nauseous. Consider, þen, of what sort is þat same þing and þat deed to be done. All þat foul

Why submit ? delight is in filð ended, (in a moment,) as þou turnest þine hand. But þat loaðsome beast remains and lasts on ; and þe disgust at it long after. If it be illegitimate it haunteð (þe doers) in an inward hell ; for þat temporary

Delight of carnality momentary. pleasure þere is an endless pain except þey abandon it and bitterly atone for it on earð under direction of þeir confessor, unless þey scorn to do what þey ðink wrong and ill to hear of. For when it is such, and by far more loaðsome þan any well-conditioned mouð for shame may tell of, what makeð it loved among beastly men, except þeir great im-

If unlawful, punished in hell. morality which beareð þem as beasts to all þat pleases þem, as þough þey had not in þem any wit nor power of distinguishing þe two, good and evil, as a man hað, nor what is comely and uncomely, any more þan beasts have, wið þeir dumb mouðs. Yea, even less þan beasts, for þese do þeir natural bidding wiðout wit, þough þey be restrained to one time of þe year. Many of þem keep to one mate, and after loss of þat will take to no oþer. And man þat should have wit and do all þat he doð according to its direction, followeð þat filð at every time : and takes one after anoþer, and what is worse, many togeðer. See how þis immorality brings þee to þe level, not only of witless beasts dumb and brokenbacked (*prone*), bent towards þe earð ; þee þat art in intellect created in þe image of God, and erected boð body and head towards heaven ; because þou shouldest raise þy heart towards þat place where þine heritage is ;— take notice how þis immorality makeð þee not only an

Compares men and women to beasts.

Carnality degrades.

liuen meiden iþi meidenhad ouer þat heo libben. teke þe libben, B.
murhðe 7 te menske in heuene. þat muð ne mai nummen
Nu þu art iwedded. 7 of se heh se lahe iliht. of englene
ilicneffe. of ih'u cristeð leofmon. of leaſdi in heuene; in to
fleſchef fulðe. in to beaſteð liſlade. in to monneð þeowdom
7 in to worldes weane. 3ei nu hwat frut 7 for hwuch þing
meaſt hit is. al for þi. oðer ane deale þer fore. beo nu soð
cnaweſ. for to kele þi luſt wið fulðe of þi licome. for to [Fol. 119c.]
habbe delit of þi fleſchliche wil of monneð imeane. for gode
hit iſ wlateful þing for te þenke þron 7 for to ſpeke þerof; 3et
wlatefulre. loke þenne hw[u]ch beo þat ſelue þing. 7 þat dede
to donne. Al þat fule delit iſ wið fulðe aleid aſ tu turneſt
þin hond. Ah þat laðliche beaſt leaueð 7 laſt forð. And te
ofþuncheinge þrof longe þer after. Aut te unſeli horlinges T. has here an
unlaheleche hit haunteð in inwarde helle for þat hwilende erasure.
luſt endeles pine bute 3iſ ha hit leauen 7 hit on eorðe
under ſchrift bitterliche beten. forhohe for to don hit þat te
þuncheð uel of 7 eil for ta heren. for hwen hit iſ þullich
7 muche dale laðluker þen eni welitþe muð for ſchome
mahe ſeggen. hwat makeð hit iluued bituhhe beaſtliche
men bute hare muchele unþeaw þat bereð aſ beaſteð to al
þat ham luſteð aſ tah ha neſden wit in ham ne tweire [Fol. 119d.]
ſchead aſ mon haueð ba of god 7 of uel. of cumelich 7 of
uncumelich na mare þen beaſtes þat dumbe neb habbeð.
Ah leaſſe þen beaſtes 3et. for þeos doð hare cunde wiðute bute, B.
wit þah ha beon in a time of þe 3er. Moni halt him til an
make. ne nule after þat lure neauer nimen oðer. And mon
þat ſchulde haue wit 7 do al þat he dude after hire wiſſinge. don, B.
folheð þat fulðe in eauer euch time. 7 nimeð an after an. wilnunge, B.
7 monie þat iſ wurfe; monie to eedereſ. loke hu þiſ un-
þeaw ne eueneð þe nawt ane to witleſe beaſtes dumbe 7
broke rugget ibuhe toward te eorðe. þe þat art iwit iwraht
to godeſ ilicneffe. 7 iriht ba bodi up 7 heaued toward
heuene. for þi þat tu ſchuldeſt þin herte heouen þiderward
aſ tin heritage iſ. 7 eorðe forhohien. Nim 3eme hu þiſ þin, B.
unþeaw ne makeð þe nawt ane euening ne ilich him ah [Fol. 120a.]

The animal nature of the flesh.

Carnal pleasures make one "lower than a beast."

She argues for the prudence of a match.

He replies by strong language.

Loss of virginity irreparable.

Happiness of wedlock denied.

Married folk have differences.

St. Austin on earthly joys.

equal and like to þem, beasts, but doð much more odiously, and what is more to be guarded against, þee, þat misshapest þyself, wilfully and purposely, into þeir nature; þat forfeitest so high a destiny, þe virtue and fitness of maidenhoods grace, for so foul a filð as was above exposed. Who-soever, from being an angel, alighteð to become lower þan a beast, for recompense so loaðsome, see how þey speed. Nay, þou wilt say, as for þat filð, it is nought, but a mans vigour is worð much, and I need his help for maintenance and food; of a womans and mans commerce worldly weal arises, and a progeny of fair children þat must give joy to þeir parents. Now þus hast þou said, and ðinkest þat þou sayest sooð. But I will shew þat þis is all made smooð wiþ falsehood. But first of all, now, whatsoever weal or win come out of it, it is all too dear bought, for which þou soilest þyself and surrenderest þine own dear body to be so given up to ill usage, and dealt wiþ so shamefully, wiþ so irrecoverable a loss as þe grace of maidenhood is; and made prolific also for worldly profit. Wo worð þat barter, to give away for any temporary weal maidenhood, which is queen of heaven, since as of þis loss þere is no recovery, so every value is valueless in comparison of it. Þou sayest þat a wife hað much comfort of her husband, when þey are well consorted, and each is well content wiþ þe oþer. Yea. But tis rarely seen on earð. Be it, however, so: wherein is þeir comfort and delight for þe most part but in þe filð of þe flesh or worldly vanity, which turns all to sorrow and care in þe end. Not only in þe end, but ever and anon; for many þings shall anger and vex þem, and make þem careful and sorry, and sigh for each oþers ills. Many þings shall separate and divide þem which annoy loving persons: and þe dint of deað at þe end sever one from þe oþer. So it cannot but be þat þat vigour must end in misery, and þe greater was þeir satisfaction togeðer þe sorer is þe sorrow at parting. Wherefore woe is þem, since, as St. Austin saið, as to what is tied wiþ excess of affection to any earðly object, the delight is bought for ever wiþ a double dole of bitterness, and a false joy wiþ many a sore pain. But well is she þat loveð God: for she can never

deð muchel etiluker ⁊ mare to witen þat forschuppes te þe, B.
self willef ⁊ waldef in to hare cunde. þat leofse þenne se þe, B.
heh þing þe mihte ⁊ te biheoue of meidenhades menske for
se ful fulðe as if ischeawet þruppe. Hwafe of engel lihteð
to iwurðen lahene þen a beaft. for se laðli chaffere; loke
hu ha spede. Nai þu wult seggen for þat fulðe nis hit
nawt. Ah monnes elne if muche wurð. ⁊ me beheoueð
his help to fluttunge ⁊ to fode. Of wif ⁊ weres eederinge
weorldeð wele awakeneð ⁊ streon of feire children þat
gladien muchel þe ealdren. Nu þu hauest iseid tus ⁊ gleadið, B.
þunched þat tu segges soð. Ah Jehulle ischeawen hit alwið hauest iseid, B.
falschipe ismeðet. Ah on alre earst nu hwat weole oðer B. omits nu.
hwat wunne se þer eauer of cume; to deore hit beoð aboht.
þat tu þeself fulest fore. ⁊ ȝeuest þin ahne dere bodi to [Fol. 120b].
tugen swa to wundre. ⁊ fare wið se schomliche wið swuch beare, B. for
uncouerlich lure af meidenhades menske if. ⁊ temede baðe ahne dere.
for worldliche biȝeate. wa wurðe þat chaffere for eni
hwilende weole fullen meidenhad awei þat cwen if of þe, B.
heuene for al swa as of þis lure nis nan acoueringe; al
swa if euch wurð unwurð her toward. þu seist þat muche
confort haueð wif of hire were þat beoð wel igedered ⁊ þe, B.
eiðer if alles weis paid of oðer. ȝea. Ah hit if felt sene ipaiet, B.
on eorðe. Beo nu þah swuch. hare confort ⁊ hare delit
hwerin if hit al meast bute isfeschef fulðe oðer in weorldeð buten, B.
uanite þat wurðeð al to sorhe ⁊ to care on ende. nawt ane þe, B. sar, B.
on ende; ah eauer umbehwile. for moni þing schal ham
wraððen ⁊ gremen ⁊ makie to carien ⁊ for hare oðref
uel forhen ⁊ siken. Moni þing ham schal twinnen ⁊ [Fol. 120c.]
tweinen þat laðes leouie men. ⁊ deaðes dunt on ende eiðer laðis, B.
fram oðer. Swa þat ne beð hit naues weis þat tat elne
ne schal enden in earmðe. ⁊ eauer se hare murðe wes mare
togederef; se þe sorhe if sarre at te twinninge. wa if him
forþi as seint Austin seið þat if wið to muche luue to eni
eorðliche þing iteiet. for eauer beð þat swete aboht wið
twa dale of bittre. ⁊ a fals wunne wið moni far tene. Ah soð, B.
wel hire þat luueð godd. for him ne mai ha nanes weis

lose him any wise, except she play false to him and quit his love. But she will find him ever sweeter and more savoury from age to age, for ever and ever.

Opposes himself
to the prudential
argument.

Thou spakest above of a mans help towards subsistence and food. See now! little needst þou care about þine own living, a meek maiden as þou art and his dear leman who is lord of all þings, nor doubt but he is easily able and gladly will find þee abundantly all þat þou hast need of. And þough þou hadst want, or sufferedst any distress for

Christ tries his
spouses love.

his precious love, as oþer women do for a mans, for þy well-fare he permits it to try wheðer þou be true, and he is preparing þy reward, many times greater, in heaven. Under a man's protection þou shalt be sore vexed for his and þe worlds love, which are boð deceptive, and must lie awake in many a care not only for þyself as Gods spouse must, but for many oþers, and often as well for þe detested as þe

Worries of house-
wives.

dear; and be more worried þan any drudge in þe house, or any hired hind, and take þine own share often wiþ misery, and bitterly purchase it. Little do blessed spouses of God know of þee here, þat in so sweet ease wiþout such trouble

Spouses of Christ
have leisure for
spiritual ease.

in spiritual grace and in rest of heart love þe true love, and in his only service lead þeir life. Tis well enough wiþ þem here and far different elsewhere. All þe worlds weal is rife enough for þem. Þey have of it all þat þey much desire. Whatsoever God sees will be of advantage to þem. Nor may any worldly mishap bereave þem of þeir weal, for þey are rich and wealðy wiþin in þe heart. All þe delicacy and all þe ease is on earð as þe oþer þings of earð, godless and impaired (have þeir possessors never so much of þese external worldly advantages), for þey are always alarmed about losing þem, and yet itch after much more:

Wealth is hard
to keep, and
causes anxiety.

þey gain it wið grief, þey watch over it wið fear, þey quit it wið sorrow. Þey toil to acquire it, þey acquire to lose it, þey lose it to sorrow over it. Þus it is þe worlds wheel þat whirleð þem about. Þieves steal it from þem. Rievers rob it from þem. Þeir superior lords punish and enrage þem. Þe moð fretteð þe cloþes, and plague slayeð þe cattle, and þough none of þese þings make weal to perish, whenever þere is much, þe more þere is, þe more is þat which wasteð it. And I know not why men say

bute þif ha like him 7 his luue leaue ; neauer mare leofen.
Ah schal ifinden him a swettere 7 saurure fram worlde in a 4, B.
to worlde a on ecenfe.

þu speke þruppe of mones help to fluttunge 7 to fode.
Weila lutel þarf þe carien for þin anes liueneð a meke Wala, B.
meiden af tu art 7 his deore leofmon þat is alre þinge
lauerd. þat he ne mahe lihtliche. 7 þat he nule glatluche 7e, B.
ifinde þe largeliche al þat te biheoueð. And tah þu wone
hefdest oðer drehdest ani derf for his deorewurðe luue af þe [Fol. 120d.]
oðre doð for monnes. to goderheale þin he hit þoleð to
fonde þe hweðer þu beo treowe. 7 greiðeð þi mede moni-
fald in heuene. Vnder monnes help þu schalt sare beon
iderued for his 7 for þe worldes luue þat beoð baðe þe, B. ba, B.
fwikele. 7 wakien imoni care. nawt ane for þe self as þarf
godes spuse. ah schalt for monie oðre. afe wel for þe laðe
ofte af for þe leue 7 mare beon idrecchet þen eni driuel iþe
hus oðer eni ihured hine 7 tin anes dale bruken ofte wið
bale. 7 bitterliche abuggen. litel witen her of þe felie godes
spuses þat ife fwote eife wiðute fwuch trubuil. in gastelich þe, B.
este 7 ibreošte rešte luueð þe soðe luue. 7 in his anes seruise
hare lif leadeð Jnoh wel ham if her. 7 unilich ellesher. Ah, B.
Alle worldes wele ham is inoh riue. Al ha habbeð þerof
þat ha wel wilneð. Al þat eauer godd ifeoð þat ham
wule framien. Ne mei na worldlich unhap bireauen ham
hare weole. for ha beoð riche 7 weolefule iwið iþe herte. [Fol. 121a.]
Al þe este 7 al þe eife if her af þe oðre beoð godlese 7
ignahene. nabben ha neuer se muchel wiðuten iþe worlde ;
for þat ha beon eauer feard for to losen 7 7ifceð þah after
muche. deale mare wið earmðe biwinneð hit wið fearlac
biwiteð hit. forleoßen hit wið sorhe. Swinken to biþeotene.
Biþeten for to leofen leofen for to sorhen. þus tif worldes
hweol warpeð ham abuten. þeoues hit stelen ham. Reaueres
hit robbeð. Hare ouerherren witið ham 7 wraððeð.
Mohðe fret te claðes. 7 cwalm flað þat ahte. 7 tah nan of
þeos ne makien to forwurðen weole. þer af muchil is eauer
se þer mare is ; se ma beoð þat hit wasteð. 7 nat ich

beoð, B.
offearet, B.

forleoßeð, B.
swinkeð, B.
biþeoteð, B.
leaseð, B.
steleð, B.

A rich man is rich for others, and only takes a small share to himself.

Suppose thyself poor.

A husband not loved spoils all enjoyment of wealth.

Husband and wife on ill terms described.

Concubitus no delight then.

Schemata.

þat þey rule it at all, who, will þey nill þey, guard it for so many opers, not merely for þeir friends, but for þeir thorough foes, and who can have no more of it, þough þey have sworn it, but þeir own share only. Þis is now stated because of what þou saidst above, þat of þe union of man and wife would arise riches and worldly weal: þat þou understand how little it profiteð þem even here, in þis world, besides þat it robs þem of þe high kingdom of heaven, unless amidst þeir wealð þey be poor wið holiness of heart. Þus, woman, if þou hast a husband to þy mind and enjoyment, also, of worldly weal, must needs happen to þe. And what if it happen, as þe wont is, þat þou have neiþer þy will wið him, nor weal eiþer, and must groan wiðout goods wiðin waste walls, and in want of bread must breed þy row of bairns; and still furþer, viro quem summo odio habes, succumbere, who, þough þou hadst all wealð, will turn it to sorrow; for, suppose now, þat power and plenty were rife wið þee, and þy wide walls were proud and well supplied, and suppose þou hadst many under þee, herdsman in hall, and þy husband were wrað wið þee, and should become hateful, so þat each of you two shall be exasperated against þe oðer, what worldly good can be acceptable to þee? When he is out, þou shalt have against his return sorrow, care, and dread. While he is at home, þy wide walls seem too narrow for þee; his looking on þee makes þee aghast; his loaðsome voice and his rude grumbling fill þee wið horror. He chideð and jaweð þee, and he insults þee shamefully; he makeð mock at þee, as a lecher wið his hore; he beateð þee and mawleð þee as his bought thrall and patrimonial slave. Þy bones ake, and þy flesh smarteð, þy heart wiðin þee swelleð of sore rage, and þy face externally burneð wið vexation. Qualis denique erit conventus vester in lectulo? Illi autem, qui summo amore inter se diligunt, sæpe in hac re se abstinēt, quod tamen mane surgentes dissimulant; atque non raro multi, homines nauci, nunquam invicem inter se amant, tam acerbe alter alteram vexat, et alterum altera. Illa autem nolens, quod vult vir, tolerabit, idque sæpius multa repugnans. Eius omnes impuritates atque ludos indecoros, quantumvis cum spurcitiā excogitatos, in lectulo nempe,

neauer hwi mon seið þat heo hit al weldeð þat wullen me, B.
 ha nulle ha ⁊ biwiteð hit to se monie oðre. nawt ane to biwinneð, B.
 hare freond; ah to hare fulle fan. ne habben ne mahen
 þrof þah ha hit hefden sworn bute hare anes dale. þis is [Fol. 121b.]
 nu forþi ifeid þat tu seideð þruppe. þat ter walde wakenen seideð, B.
 of wif ⁊ weres somninge richesce ⁊ worlde weole. þat tu
 underfonde hu lutel hit frameð ham ⁊et her ipis worlde
 teke þat hit reauð ham þe hehe riche of heuene bute ha
 poure beon þrin wið halinesse of heorte. þus wummon þer in, B.
 ȝif þu haueð were after þi wil ⁊ wunne ba of weorldeð
 weole. þe schal nede itiden. And hwat ȝif ha beoð þe
 wone þat tu habbe þi wil wið him. ne weole nowðer. ⁊
 schalt greni godles inwið waste wahes. ⁊ in breades wone greuin, B.
 brede ti barnteam. ⁊ teke þis liggen under laðeð mon. þat bredeð, T.
 tah þu haðeð alle weole; went him te to weane. for beo he went hit, B.
 hit nu þat te beo richedom riue. ⁊ tine wide wahes wlonke
 ⁊ welefulle. ⁊ habbe monie under þe hirdmen in halle ⁊ ti [Fol. 121c.]
 were beo þe wrað ⁊ iwurðe þe lað swa þat inker eiðer
 heafci wið oðer. hwat worldlich weole mei beo þe wunne;
 Hwen he beoð ute; haueð aȝain his ham cume far care ⁊
 eie. Hwil he bið at hame; alle þine wide wahes þuncheð
 þe to narewe. His lokinge on þe agastið þe. His laðliche
 nurð ⁊ his untohe bere makeð þe to agrifen. Chit te ⁊ mirhð, T.
 cheopeð þe ⁊ schent te schomeliche tukeð þe to biðmere as
 huler his hore. Beateð þe ⁊ busteð þe af his ibohte þrel
 ⁊ his eðell þeowe þine banes akeð þe. ⁊ þi flesch smerteð
 þin heorte in wið þe swelleð of far grome. ⁊ ti neb ute
 wið tendreð ut of tene. Hwuch schal beo þe somnunge
 bituhhen ow ibedde? Me þeo þat best luueð ham tebeoreð þe, B.
 ofte þrin þah ha þerof na semblaund ne makien inne mar-
 hen. ⁊ ofte moni nohtunge ne luuien ha ham neauer swa
 bitterliche bi ham self teoneð eiðer oðer. Ha schal his Heo, B.
 wil muchel hire unwil drehen ne luue ha him neauer swa [Fol. 121d.]
 wel wið mucche weane ofte. Alle hife sulitoheschiþeð ⁊
 hife unhende gomenes. ne beon ha neauer swa wið fulðe
 bifunden nomeliche ibedde. ha schal wulle ha nulle ha

nolens volens perferet. May Christ shield every maiden
 A filthy subject. from inquiring or wishing to know what þese be; for þey
 þat try þem most, find þem most odious, and hate what þey
 haunt, and call þese happy who know not what all þis
 means. But whosoever lieð in foul pools, deep sunken,
 þough he be conscious he is badly off, never shall recover
 himself when he would. Look around, seely maiden, if
 No escape from a once wedded husband. þe knot of wedlock be once knotted, let þe man be a
 dump or a cripple, be he whatever he may be, þou must
 keep to him. If þou art fair, and wið fair cheer fairly
 salutest all, in no wise shalt þou protect þyself against
 depreciation and evil blame. If þou art of no great
 esteem and illtempered, þou mayest boð to oðers and to
 þy husband become of still less esteem. If þou become of
 small esteem to him and he of as little to þee, or if þou
 love him much and he regards þee little, it will grieve þee
 Then hatred is so strong that women resort to poison, so strongly þat, quick enough, þou wilt, as many cursed
 women have done, make poison, and give him a dose of
 deað in place of remedy. Or whosoever will not act so,
 or to witches. may deal wið witches, and to draw his love towards her,
 will forsake Christ and Christianity, and þe true faið.
 Now what bliss can þis woman enjoy, who loveð her
 husband well, and hað his detestation, or who conquers
 his love in such a manner as þat? When should I have
 told of all þe ill þat springeð up between þem þat are þus
 A barren woman called gelt. associated? If she cannot breed, she is called gelt. Her
 lord loveð her less and respects her less, and she as one
 þat is very bad, weepeð at her fate, and calleð þem glad
 and happy þat breed a family. But now suppose it all
 happen þat she have her wish of offspring, as she pleases,
 and þen let us see what amount of joy arises þerefrom.
 Objections to breeding a family. In concipiendo caro eius sordibus istis inquinatur, as was
 before shewn. In the gestation is heaviness and hard pain
 every hour; in þe actual birð is of all pangs þe strongest,
 and occasionally deað; in þe nourishing þe child, many a
 miserable moment. As soon as it appears in þis life, it
 The trouble the child gives. bringeð wið it more care þan joy, namely, to its moðer;
 for if it is a misshapen birð, as often happens, and if it
 Of a misshapen child. wants any of its limbs, or if somewhat be amiss, it is a
 sorrow to her, and a shame to all its kindred, a reproach in
 an evil mouð, a talk among all men. If it is wellshapen

þolien ham alle. Crist schilde euch meiden to freinen oðer
to wilnen for to wite hwucche ho beon. for þea þat fondeð þe, B.

ham meast; ifindeð ham forcudeft. ⁊ clepeð ham selie iwif

þe nuten neauer hwat hit is ⁊ hatieð þat ha haunteð. Ah

hwafe lið ^{Fr. i lei-von} ileinen deope bifunken þah him þunche uuel þrin

he ne schal nawt up acoueren hwen he walde. Bifih þe

feli meiden beo þe cnot icnute anef of wedlac beo he cangun

oðer crupel beo he hwuch se he eauer beo; þu most to him

halden. þif þu art feir ⁊ wið glad chere biclepeft alle feire;

ne schaltu onane wife wite þe wið unworð ne wið uuel

blame. þif þu art unwurðlich ⁊ wraðeliche ilatet. þu

maht ba to oðre ⁊ to þi were iwurðen þe unwurðere. þif

þu iwurðest him unwurð. ⁊ he afe unwurð þe. oðer þif

þu him mucche lueft ⁊ he let lutel to þe hit greueð þe se

fiwe þat tu wilt inoh raðe as monie awariede doð makien

puifun ⁊ þeouen bale ibote stude. Oðer hwa se swa nule

don; medi wið wicchen ⁊ forfaken for to drahen his lue

toward hire; crist ⁊ hire cristendom ⁊ rihte bileaue. Nu

hwat blisse mei þeos bruken þat lueð hire were wel ⁊

habbes his laððe oðer cuncweari his lue oþulliche wife?

Hwenne schulde ich al habbe irekened þat springeð bituhhe

þeo þat tus beon icedered. þif ha ne mei nawt teamen; ha

is iclepet gealde. Hire lauord lueð hire ⁊ wurðchipeð

þe leaffe ⁊ heo as þeo þat wurft is þrof biwepeð hire wurdef

⁊ cleopeð ham wunne ⁊ weolefulle þat teamen hare teamef.

Ah nu iwurðe hit al þat ha habbe hire wil of streon þat

ha wilneð. ⁊ loke we hwuch wunne þer of cume þpe

streonunge þrof; if on earft hire flesch wið þat fulden

ituked as hit if ear ischeawet. þpe burþerne þer of; is

heauineffe ⁊ hard far eauer umbe stunde. In his iboreneffe

alre stiche strongest ⁊ deað oðer hwiles. In his fostreng

forð; moni arm hwile. Sone se hit lihtes ipis lif; mare

hit bringeð wið him care þen blisse nomeliche to þe moder.

for þif hit is misborn as hit ilome limpeð ⁊ wont eni of

his limen oþer sum missfare; hit if forhe to hire. ⁊ to al

his cun schome vpbrud in uuel muð. tale bimong alle. þif

ileifen, B.

cnotte, B.

[Fol. 122a.]

þe, B.

þe, B.

wurðgeð, B.

þe, B.

[Fol. 122b.]

anan, B.

lihteð, B.

wonti ei, B.

Anxiety about
losing a child.

A husband is to
be shunned.

A text (Romans
vi. 18) against
fornication, ap-
plied, by this
rant, to mar-
riage.

Troubles of ges-
tation.

Painful descrip-
tion of maternal
distresses.

Matri longa de-
cem tulerunt
fastidia menses.

Travelling in
childbirth.

and seemeð likely to live, a fear of þe loss of it is instantly
born along wið it, for she is never wiðout fear lest it go
wrong, till one or oþer of þe two lose þe oþer. And often
it occurs þat þe child most loved and most bitterly pur-
chased, sorrows most and disturbs his parents at last.
Now what joy hað þe moþer? She hað from þe misshapen
child sad care and shame, boð, and for þe ðriving one, fear,
till she lose it for good, þough it never would have been
in being for þe love of God nor for þe hope of heaven nor
for þe dread of hell. Woman! þou oughtest to have
shunned þis pain beyond all ðings, for þe welldoing
of þy flesh, for þe love of þine own person, for þe
healð of þy body, for as S. Paul saið, every sin þat
a man doð is wiðout þe body, but þis one. All oþer
sins are noðing but sins, but þis is a sin and besides
denaturalises þee and dishonoureð þy body. It soileð þy
soul, and makeð it guilty before God, and, moreover,
defileð þy flesh. It is guilty in two respects: it makeð
wrað þe omnipotent wið þat sooty sin, and þou dost
wrong to þyself, þat þou so shamelessly treatest þyself.
Now let us proceed. Consider we what joy ariseð from
gestation of children, when þe offspring in þee quickeneð
and groweð. How many miseries immediately wake up
þerewið, and work þee woe enough, fight at þine own
flesh, and wið many sorrows make war upon þine own
nature. Þy ruddy face shall turn lean and grow green as
grass. Þine eyes shall be dusky, and under þem be spots,
and by þe giddiness of þy brain þy head shall ake sorely
Wiðin þy belly þe uterus shall swell and strut out like a
water bag; þy bowels shall have pains, and þere shall be
stitches in þy flank, and pain rife in þy loins, heaviness
in every limb. Þy breasts shall be a burðen on þy paps,
and þe milk in drops which trickle out of þem. All þy
beauty is overðrown wið a wiðering. Þy mouð is bitter,
and rolls over all þat þou chewest, and wið disgust ac-
cepts whatever meat it can; þat is, wið want of appetite,
ðrows it up again. Wið al þy pleasure, and þy husbands
joy þou art perishing. Ah! wretch, þe anxiety about þy
suffering pain depriveð þee of þe nights sleep. When it
comeð to þat at last, þere is þe sore sorrowful anguish, þe
strong piercing pang, þe comfortless ill, þe pain upon pain,
þe miserable wail. While þou art in trouble þerewið, in

hit wel iborn if 7 puncheð wel forðlich; fearlac of his
 lure is anan wið him iboren. for nis ha neauer wiðute care bute, B.
 leste hit ne misseare aðat owðer of ham twa ear lose oðer.
 And ofte hit timeð þat tat leoueste bearn. 7 iboht bitter- tet, B.
 lukest forheð 7 sweameð meast his caldren on ende. Nu
 hwat wunne haueð þe moder. Ha haueð of þe forschuppet of þat, B.
 bearn far care 7 schome baðe. 7 fearlac of þat forðlich [Fol. 122a.]
 aðat ha hit leofe for gode þah hit neauer nere for godef B. omits care.
 lue ne for hope of heuene. ne for dred of helle. þu ahtest
 wummon þis werc for þi fleschef halfchiþe for þi licomesf
 lue 7 ti bodies heale ouer alle þing to schunien. for as ase, B.
 s. pawel seið euch sunne þat men deð is wiðute þe bodi me, B.
 bute þis ane. Alle oðre sunnen ne beoð bute sunnen. ah Alle þe, B.
 þis if sunne. 7 eke uncunnelicheð þe 7 unwurðeheð þi ec, B.
 bodi. Suleð þi sawle. 7 makeð schuldi toward godd 7
 fuleð þi flesch ec. Gulteð o twa half, wraððeð þen al wreaðest, B.
 wealdent wið þat futi sunne 7 doft woh to þe self þat tu se dest, B. þat
 schomeliche takest. ¶ Ga þe nu forðre. loke we hwuch tu alwilles, B.
 wunne ariseð þet after iburðerne of bearne hwen þat streon
 ipe awakeneð 7 waxeð. Hu moni earmðen anan awakeneð
 þer wið þat wurcheð þe wa inoh sehteð oþis elue flesch 7 þe, B.
 weorreð wið fele weanen oþin ahne cunde. þi rudi neb [Fol. 122a.]
 schal leanen 7 as gref grenen. þine ehnen schulen dofskin þin, T.
 7 under þon wonnen 7 of breines turnunge þin heaued ake underneoðe, B.
 fare Jnwið þi wombe swelin þe bitte þat beoreð forð as a butte þe, B.
 water bulge. þine þarmes þralinge 7 stiches iþi lonke. 7
 iþi lendene far eche riue. Heuineße in euch lime. þine
 brestes burðen oþine twa pappes. 7 te milc strunden þat te burþerne, B.
 of strikeð Al is wið a welewunge þi wlite ouer warpen. þe þe, B.
 þi muð if bitter 7 walh al þat tu cheowest. 7 hwit mete
 se þi mahe hokerliche underfeð. þat if wið unluft; warpeð
 hit eft ut. Jnwið al þi wel 7 ti weres wunne; forwurðest
 a wrecche. þe care aȝain þi pinunge þrahen binimeð þe
 nihtes slepes. Hwen hit þer to cumeð þat far forhfulc an-
 goiße. þat stronge 7 stikinde stiche þat unrotes uel þat pine
 upo pine. þat wondrende ȝeomerunge. Hwil þu fwenbhest
 weole, B.

Office of the mid-
 wife. Inflicte
 episcope !

Why he calls up
 these topics.

Child squalls.

Wants candle.

His mother
 anxious about
 his life.

I. Corint. vii. 28.

These arguments
 irrefragable.

Maidens do not
 anticipate all
 these troubles.

Housewifely
 anxieties.

þe dint of deað, shame þere is to increase þat sorrow ; wið
 þe old wives indelicate skill, who know of þat untoward case.
 Consider whose help þou must have, be it never so unbe-
 coming. þey must needs know all þat herein occurs. Yet
 let it not seem amiss to þee þat we so speak ; for we reproach
 not women wið þeir sufferings, which þe moðers of us all
 endured at our own birðs ; but we exhibit þem to warn
 maidens, þat þey be þe less inclined to such ðings, and
 guard þemselves by a better consideration of what is to be
 done. After all þis þere comeð from þe child þus born a
 wanting and a weeping, þat must about midnight make þee
 to waken, or her þat holds þy place, for whom þou must
 care. And what are þe oþer nasty offices and matters about
 þe bosom ? to swaddle and to feed þe child for so many un-
 happy moments. And consider his late growing up and
 his slow ðriving, and þat þou must even have an anxiety in
 looking for þe time when þe child will perish, and bring on
 his moðer sorrow upon sorrow. Þough þou be rich, and
 have a nurse, þou must, as a moðer, care for all þat to þe
 nurse belongeð to be done. Þese and oðer miseries which
 wedlock awakeneð S. Paul comprehendeð in one group of
 words : þey þat be of þat sort shall suffer tribulation. Who-
 soever ðinkeð of all þis, and of more þat þere is unmen-
 tioned, and will not scorn þe deed from which it all ariseð,
 she is harder hearted than stone of adamant ; and more
 mad, if þat can be, þan madness itself. She is her own
 foe and her own enemy, and hateð herself. Little knoweð
 a maiden of all þis same trouble of wives woe, in her rela-
 tion to her husband ; nor of þeir work so nauseous þat þey
 in common work ; nor of þe pain, nor of þe foul incidents
 in þe gestation and parturition of a child ; nor of a nurses
 watches, nor of her sad trials in þe feeding and fostering :
 how much she must at once put into its mouð, neiþer too
 much nor too little ; þough þis be to speak of ðings not of
 any importance, þough þey display still furþer in what
 slavery wives be, þat must endure þe like, and in what
 freedom maidens be, þat are free from þem all. And what
 if I ask besides, þat it may seem odious, how þe wife stands,
 þat heareð when she comeð in her child scream, sees þe cat
 at þe fitch, and þe hound at þe hide ; her cake is burning on
 þe stone hearð, and her calf is sucking (all þe milk up), þe

te þer wið iþi deaðes dute. Schome teke þat far. wið
 alle þe alde wiues schome creft þat cunnen of þat wafið.
 Hwas help þe bihoueð. ne beo hit neuer se uncumelich.
 Ha moten nede witen al þat te þer in timeð. ne þunche þe
 nan uuel of for we ne edwiten nawt wiues hare weanen þat edwiteð, B.
 ure alre modres drehden on us seluen Ah we scheapeð
 ham forð for to wearnen meidnes þat ha beon þe lassē after- forte warni, B.
 ward swuch þing ⁊ witen her þurh þe beter hwat ham beo
 to don. After al þis cumeð of þat bearn iboren þus wanunge
 ⁊ wepnunge þat schal abute midniht makie to wakien. oðer donne, B.
 þeo þat ti stede halt. þat tu most fore carien. And hwat te ibore, B.
 eaðer fulðen ⁊ barmes umbe stunde to feskien ⁊ to foftrien þe, B.
 hit se moni earm hwile. ⁊ his waxunge se lat ⁊ se slaw his þe, B.
 þristi; And eauer habben far care ⁊ loken after al þis hwen [Fol. 123b.]
 hit forwurðe. ⁊ bringe on his moder sorhe up o sorhe. þah
 þu riche beo ⁊ nurice habbe; þu most as moder carien for
 al þat hire limpeð to donne. þeos ⁊ oðre armðen þat of þe, B.
 wedlac awakeneð st. pawel bilukeð in ane lut wordef.
 Tribulationes carnis &c. þat is. on englich. þeo þat þul-
 liche beoð; schulen derf drehen. Hwa se þencheð on al
 þis ⁊ omare þat ter is ⁊ nule wiðhuhe þat þing þat hit al
 of awakeneð; Ha is hardre iheorted þen adamantines stan.
 ⁊ mare amad þif ha mei beo; þen is madfchipe self. Hire amead, B.
 ahne fa ⁊ hire fend Hateð hire seluen. Lutel wat meiden
 of al þis ilke weane of wiues wa wið hire were. ne of hare
 were se wlateful þat ha imeane wurchen. ne of þat far ne
 of þat suti iþe burðerne of bearn. ⁊ his iborenessē of nurices [Fol. 123c.]
 wecches ne of hire wafiðes of þat fode foftrunge hu muchel
 ha schule at eanes in his muð samplen nowðer to muchel
 ne to lutel. þah þis beo of to speken unwurðliche þinges.
 þah þe mare ha schaweð ihwuch þeowdom wiues beon þat
 þullich moten drehe. And meidnes ihwuch fredom þat freo
 beoð fram ham alle. And hwat þif ich easki zet þat hit
 þunche egede hu þat wif stonde þat ihereð hwen ha cumeð
 in hire bearn screamen Seoð þe cat at the fliche. ⁊ te hund
 at te huide. Hire cake bearneð o þe stan. ⁊ hire calf

ne his laðer
 clutes, B. adds.

mote drehen,
 B. þe, B.

þe, B.

All this is to
alarm the maid-
ens.

earthen pot is running into þe fire, and þe churl is scolding. Pough it be an odious tale, it ought, maiden, to deter þee more strongly from marriage, for it seems not easy to her þat trieð it. Þe seely maiden þat hað fully removed herself out of þat servitude as free daughter of God, and his Sons spouse, need not suffer any ðing of þe like. Wherefore, seely maiden, forsake all such sorrow for þe meed reserved þee, as þou oughtest to do wiðout any fee. Now I have kept my promise above: þat I would show it to be wið falsehood glozed over, what many one saið and ðinkeð it true—of þe happiness and sweetness which þe wedded have; þat it fareð not so, as þose ween who look from þe outside; but it goes quite oðerwise, wið poor and wið rich, wið þose who loape and þose who love one anoðer; þat þe vexation in every case exceeds þe joy, and þe loss, beyond all, passes þe gain.

Hesumsumpunch
to the disadvan-
tage of wedlock.
Ad scalas Gemi-
nias!

Text of David re-
peated.

Now, þen, seely maiden, whom David calleð daughter, hear þy faðer, and hearken to his advice, which in þe beginning of þis writing he gave:—Forget þy people þat lieð to þee about þe joy of a husband and of þe world; þy people, þat is to say, þi ðoughts, þat deceitfully lead þee toward all vexation, and forsake þy faðers house, as was before explained, and betake þee to him truly. Wið him þou shalt enjoy, as wið þy wedded husband, world wiðout end, heavenly joys. Blessed is þe spouse of Him, whose maidenhood is untouched, quando ille super illa gignit, illa autem ea illo parit absque labore et sine dolore. Happy is þe husband when none can be a maiden except she love him, nor free except she serve him; whose offspring is immortal, and whose morrow gift is þe kingdom of heaven.

Transcendental
mysticism.

Exhorts to such
a mystical hus-
band;

Now, þen, seely maiden, if it is lief to þee, take him for þy lord, þat ruleð all þat is, and was, and ever shall be; for pough he be richest, he alone beyond all, þe poorest of all þat chooseð him for a husband is acceptable to him. If þou wishest for a husband þat hað much beauty, take him at whose beauty þe sun and þe moon are astonished, to look upon whose countenance þe angels are never satiated, for when he giveð fairness to all þat is fair in heaven and in earð, much more he hað, wiðout all conjecture, retained for himself; and pough he is þus fairest of all ðings, he

whom he extols.

fukeð. þe croh eorneð iþe fur 7 te cheorl chideð. þah hit be egede sahe; hit ah meiden to eggi þe spiðre þer framward. for nawt ne þunche hit hire egede þat hit fondeð Ne þarf þat feli meiden þat haueð al idon hire ut of þullich þeowdom afe godes fre dohter 7 his funes spuse drehe nawt fwucches. for þi feli meiden forfac al þullich forhe far ut- nume mede þat tu ahef to don wiðuten euch huire. Nu ich habbe ihalden mine biheafte þruppe. þat ich walde soheawen wið falschipe ismeðet þat te moni an seið 7 þuncheð þat hit soð beo of þe selhðe 7 te swete þat te iweddede habben þat hit ne fareð nawt swa as weneð þat iseoð utewið ah fareð al oðer weis of poure ba 7 riche of laðe 7 ec of leoue. þat te weane eihwer passeð þe winne. 7 te lure ouer al; al þe biþeate.

frommart, B.
þe, B.

[Fol. 123d.]

þulli, B.

þe þu ahtest,
B.

habbeð, B.

Nu þenne feli meiden þat dauð cleopeð dohter. Jher þi fader. 7 hercne his read þat he iþe frumðe of þis writ readde. forþet ti folc þat liheð þe of weres 7 worlðes wunne. þat beoð þine þohtes þat fwikeliche leadeð þe toward alle weane. 7 forfac þi fader hus. as hit is þeruppe iopenet. 7 tac þe to him treowliche. wið him þu schalt wealden as wið þi were iweddend world buten ende heuenriche winnen. Eadi if his spuse hwas meidenhad if unwemmed hwen he on hire streoneð 7 hwen ha teameð of him ne fwinkeð ne ne pineð Eadi if te were hwen nan ne mei beo meiden bute þif ha him luuie. ne freo bute þif ha him ferui. Hwas streon if undeadlich. 7 hwas marheþeue if te kinedom of heuene. Nu þenne feli meiden þif þe is weole leof. nim þe him to lauerd þat wealdeð al þat is 7 was 7 eauer schal iwurðen. for þah he beo richest him ane ouer alle; þe alre meast poure þat him to were cheofoð; is him wel icweme. þif þat tu wilneft were þat mucche wlite habbe; nim him of hwas wlite beoð awundret þe sunne 7 te mone. upo hwas nebschaft þe engles ne beoð neauer fulle to bihalden. for hwen he þeueð feirlec to al þat is feir in heuene 7 in earðe; mucche mare he haueð wiðuten eni etlunge at halden to him seluen. 7 tah hwen he þus is alre þinge

þe, B.

[Fol. 124a.]

heo (twice), B.

is þe, B.

þe, B.

mucchele, B.

[Fol. 124b.]

Have for offspring the virtues of the soul,

and these shall sport before thee in heaven.

But, the depravities of the heart are misbegotten children, born of fornication with the devil.

God tolerates no such unfaithfulness.

Pride is the devils eldest daughter, and if thou art its mother, what mayst thou expect?

receiveð bliðely, and embraceð openly, þe loapliest of all, and makeð þem seven times sheener þan þe sun. If offspring be desirable to þee, take þyself to him, under whom þou shalt in þy maidenhood bring forð daughters and sons of spiritual teamings, þat never can die, but shall ever before þee play in heaven; þat is to say, þe virtues þat he begetteð in þee by his sweet grace, such as righteousness, and being wary against improprieties; moderation, and temperance, and spiritual strengð to wiðstand þe devil and against sin; simplicity of manner, and affability and tranquillity, endurance and sympathy for every mans sorrow, joy in þe Holy Ghost, and in þe breast peace from envy and wrað, from covetousness and every immoral error; meekness and mildness, and sweetness of heart, þat belongeð of all ðings best to maidenhoods virtues. Such is þe offspring of maidenhood, þe spouse of þe Son of God, þat shall for ever live and play wiðout end before her in heaven. But, maiden, pough þou be intact of body, and have pride, spite, or wrað, covetousness, or wicked will, wiðin in þy heart, þou dost fornication wið þe evil one of hell, and he begetteð on þee þe offspring þat þou bearest. When þy husband, þe Almighty, to whom þou hast wedded þyself, seeð and understandeð þis, þat his enemy lieð wið þee, and þat þou breedest of him an offspring to him most loaðsome, he despiseð þee at once, as is no wonder, and surrenders þee fully to him of whom þou breedest, nor does he keep wið any man, and least of all wið his foeman, any half measures. Whosoever loveð aught but him, or any-ðing except for his sake, she enrages him much. Above all ðings know þat þou breedest pride by þe devils begetting, for of all vices þat one is his eldest daughter. Þat first sprang from him while he was yet in heaven, nearly of þe same age; and so it cast its faðer, as soon as it was born, from þe highest heaven into þe abyss of hell wiðout recovery, and made out of an archangel a most odious devil. Þe daughter þat þus dashed her heavenly faðer down, what will she do wið her earðly moðer, þat breedeð her in horedom of þe loaðsome being, þe devil of hell? When God so vengefully doomed his archangel þat begat her in heaven,

feirest; he vnderseð bliðeliche ⁊ bicluppeð swoteluche þe
alre laðlukeft ⁊ makeð ham seouenigðe schenre þen þe sunne.
þif þe were freon leof; nim þe to him under hwam þu
schalt iþi meidenhad teamen dohtren ⁊ sunen of gastliche
teames þat neauer ne deiene mahen. ah schulen ai bifore þe þe, B. aa, B.
pleien in heuene. þat beon þe uertuz þat he freoneð in þe
þurh his swete grace. As rihtwisnesse ⁊ warschipe aȝaines
unþeawes Mesure ⁊ mete ⁊ gastliche strengþe to wiðstonde
þe feond ⁊ aȝain sunne. Simplete of semblaunt. ⁊ buhsum-
nesse ⁊ stilðe. þolemodnesse ⁊ reowfulnesse of euch monnes
forhe. Gladschipe iþe hali gaste. ⁊ pes iþi breoste of onde
⁊ of wraððe. of ȝifcinge ⁊ of euch unþeawes worre. ȝisceunge, B.
Mekelec ⁊ mildschipe ⁊ swotnesse of heorte þat limpeð alre
þinge best to meidenhades mihte. þis is meidenef team godes [Fol. 124c.]
funes spuse þat schal hire ai libben ⁊ pleien buten ende aa, B.
bifore hire in heuene. ¶ Ah þah þu meiden beo wiðute
bruche of þi bodi ⁊ tu habbe prude onde oðer wraððe wið unbruche,
ȝifcinge oðer wac wil inwið iþin heorte; þu forhoreð te B.
wið þe unwiht of helle. ⁊ he freoneð on þe þe teames þat forhorest, B.
tu teamest. Hwen þi were al wealden in þat tu þe to wed- team, B.
dest. seð ⁊ underfond tis þat his fa forlið þe. ⁊ þat tu wealdent, B.
teamest of him þat him if teame laðest; he forhoheð þe
anan as hit nis na wunder. ⁊ cweðeð þe al cwrite him þat
tu of teamest. ne kepeð he wið na mon ⁊ hure wið his
famon na half dale. hwa þat luueð eawiht bute him. ⁊ nan, B. þe, B.
hwat se ha for him ne luueð ha wraððeð him fwiðe. luueð, B.
Ouer alle þing wite þe þat tu ne teami prude bi þe deoulef [Fol. 121d.]
freonunge. for heo of alle unþeawes if his ealdeste dohter.
Earst ha wakenede of him þa ȝet þa he wes in heuene. for
neh wið him euen hald. ⁊ swa ha cast hire fader sone se
ha iboren wes fram þe hehste heuene in to helle grunde
wiðute couerunge ⁊ makede of heh engel eatelukeft deouel. bute, B.
Heo þat tus adufte hire heuenliche fader adun; hwat wile
ha don bi hire eorðliche modres þat teameð hire in hore-
dom of þe laðe vnwiht þe hellene schucke. Hwen godd se þen, B.
wrafulliche fordemde his heh engel þat freonede hire in þe, B.

what will he do wið þe woman of clay, meat for worms, who of þe devil breedeð her on earð? If wið maidenhood þou hast meekness and mildness, God is in þy heart. But if in it is presumption or any pride, he is an outlaw from it, for þese must no wise bed in one breast, þey must not dwell togeðer in heaven. Þence God cast pride as soon as it was born, and as it knew not which way it came þiðerward, it can never more find its way þiðer. But dwelling here on earð, she promises as a dwelling place all her moðers—yea, moðers, þough maidens—to her accursed faðer in inmost hell. Be on guard, maiden, against her. She arose of a pure race, þe angels equals, and in purest breasts she breedeð yet. Þe best she has beguiled, and well she may hope to be victor over man, since she once overcame an angel. She is not in cloþes, nor outwardly, in particoloured dress, þough þis be a mark and a proof of her presence at oðer times; but under white, or under black, and likewise under gray, and under green and dark gray, she hideð in þe heart. As soon as þou accountest þyself better þan anoðer, for whatsoever cause, and hast contempt of any, and hast uncourteous and contemptuous ðoughts, of aught that it is said, the oþer doð take pride in, þou marrest þy maidenhood and breakest þy wedlock towards God, and breedest by his foe. Hold not þou cheap, þough þou be a maiden, þe widow nor þe wedded, for as a carbuncle is better þan a jacinot in þe average of each sort, and yet a bright jacinot is better þan a pale carbuncle; so a maiden, as regards þe grace of maidenhood, overpasseð þe widowed and þe wedded; and yet a mild wife or a meek widow is better þan a proud maiden: for þese by reason of þeir sins and þat þey follow þe filð of þe flesh, bow þemselves down as low and vile, and are sore afraid of Gods awful anger; and as þe humble sinner, Mary Magdalene, wið bitter weeping, þey lament þeir guilt, and most inwardly love God, as she did, for þeir forgiveness; and þe one sort, þat keep þemselves wiðout guilt and pure, are as secure, live lustless and lukewarm in Gods love, wiðout any heat from þe Holy Ghost, which burneð so light, wiðout a wasting combustion in all his chosen; while þe oðers, in a heat of a moment,

Pride and God cannot dwell together.

Pride is born of a high lineage.

She is found under monastic habits.

Compare not thyself with others.

Look not down on wedded women.

Penitents better than proud.

heuene; hwat wile he don bi þat lam ⁊ wurmene mete.
 þat of þe deouel teameð hire on eorðe; ⁊ if þu haues wið
 meidenhad meokelec ⁊ mildſchipe; godd is ipin heorte. Ah
 ⁊ if þer is ouerhohe oðer eni prude in; he is utlahe þrof.
 for ne muhen ha nanes weis bedden in a breoſte. ha ne
 muhen nawt ſomen earden in heuene. þeone godd warp
 hire ſone ſe ha iboren wes: ⁊ as ha nuſte hwuch wei
 ha come þeneward; ne con ha neauer mare ifinden na
 wei aȝainward. Ah eardinde her on eorðe bihaſt eche
 wununge alle hire modres al beon ha meidnef wið hare
 awariede fader in inwarde helle. Wite þe meiden wið hire.
 Ha cwikede of cleane cunde af if in englef euene ⁊ clen-
 neſte breſten bredeð hire ȝette. þe beſte ha af aȝileð. ⁊
 wel ha dar hopein to beo kempen ouer mon þat ouercom
 engel. Niſ ha nawt in claðes ne in feahunge utewið þah
 hit beo merke þrof ⁊ munegunge oðer hwiles. Ah under
 hwit oðer blac. ⁊ af ewel vnder grei as under grene ⁊ gra.
 ha luteð iþe heorte. Sone ſo þu telles te betere þen an
 oðer. beo hit hwerfore ſe hit eauer beo ⁊ haueſt of eni
 ouerhohe ⁊ þuncheð hoſles ⁊ hoker of ewt þat mon ſeið þe
 oðer deð ȝette; þu marres ti meidenhad ⁊ brekes ti wedlac
 toward godd ⁊ of hiſ fa temes Ne telle þu nawt eðelich
 al beo þu meiden to widewen ne to iweddede. for alſwa as
 a charbucle if betere þen a iacinct iþe euene of hare cunde.
 ⁊ tah is betere a briht iacinct þen a charbucle won. Alſwa
 paſſeð meiden onont te mihte of meidenhad; widewen ⁊
 iweddede ⁊ tah is betere a milde wiſ oðer a meoke widewe
 þen a prud meiden. for þeos for hore funnen þat ha iſleſches
 fulðe folhen leoten ham lahe ⁊ eðeliche. ⁊ beoð fare
 offeared of godes luðere eie. And as te eadi ſunegild marie
 magdalene. wið bittre wopes bireowſeð hare gultes. ⁊ in-
 wardlukeſt luuieð godd al ſwa as heo dide for hare for-
 ȝeoueneſſe. And te oðre þat halden ham vnforgult ⁊ cleane;
 beon aſe ſikere unlufſtie ⁊ wlecche lueð igodes luue wið-
 uten euch heate of þe hali gaſt þat bearneð ſe lihte wiðute
 waſtinde brune in alle hiſe icorene. And te oðre in a heate

þe, B. in eaw-
 bruche, B.
 [Fol. 125a.]

ne ne maken,
 B.
 ſomet, B.

earmðe, B.
 bihaſt, B.

[Fol. 125b.]
 aſaileð, B.

mahunge, B.
 aa, B.

telleſt, B.

eawt, B. me, B.
 -eſt, B.

[Fol. 125c.]

þah, B.

hare, B.
 folhið oþer
 fulieð, B.

þe, B.
 [Fol. 125d.]
 unneaðe, B.
 for lueð.
 þe, B.
 an, B.

are more melted and liquefied into good, þan þe first in þeir lukewarmness all þeir lifetime. Wherefore, blessed maiden, spouse of þe Son of God, be not þou too confident in þy maidenhood only wiðout oðer good and moral virtues, and especially mildness and meekness of heart, after þe example of þat maiden blessed beyond all oðers, Mary, þe moðer of God. For when þe archangel Gabriel greeted her, and brought her þe tidings of Christs conception, observe how low she let herself be when she answered þus of herself: "Behold, þe ðrall of þe Lord; according to þy word," said she, "may it be to me." And þough she were full of all good manners, she only said of her meekness and sang to Elizabeð, "For now my Lord hað regarded þe low estate of his hand maiden. All people," said she, "shall call me blessed." Take heed, maiden, and understand hereby, þat more for her meekness þan for her maidenhood, she believed she experienced such grace from our Lord.

Be not overconfident in thy maidenhood. ✓

Luke i. 38.

Luke i. 48.

Meekness indispensable. ✓

Think of Mary and the virgin saints, and of their constancy.

Combat the flesh with arguments and resolution.

To all maidenhood meekness is worð much, and maidenhood wiðout it is vile and worð noðing; for a maiden in her maidenhood wiðout meekness is just like oil in a lamp wiðout light. Blessed spouse of God! have þis same virtue, þat þou seem not darksome, but shine as þe sun in þy husband's sight. Vary þy maidenhood wið all good manners, which seem to him fair. Have ever in þine heart þe most blessed of maidens and moðer of maidenhood, and ever beseech her to enlighten þee and give þee love and strengþ to follow in maidenhood her excellencies. þink of St. Kaðarine, St. Margaret, St. Agnes, St. Juliana, St. Lucy, St. Cecilia, and of þe oðer holy maidens in heaven; how þey not only refused kings sons and earls wið all worldly wealþ and earþly joys, but endured strong pains raþer þan accept þem and a sorrowful deað at last. þink how well þey are off now, and how þey revel now in Gods arms as queens of heaven. And if it ever happens þat þy bodys lust, ðrough þe false fiend, leadeð þee towards carnal filþ, answer þy ðoughts þus: "þou makest no progress, deceiver! Such will I be in a maidens life as is an angel in heaven. I will keep myself intact ðrough þe grace of God, as nature me made, þat þe joys of paradise may receive me; such as were, before þey sinned, its first cultiva-

of a hondhwile beon imealt mare ⁊ iȝotten in godd þen þe an, B.
 oðre in a wlecchunge al hare lifsiðe. Forþi eadi meiden lifsiðen, B.
 godes sunes, B.
 had wiðuten oðer God ⁊ þawfulle mihtes ⁊ ouer al milt-
 schipe ⁊ meokeschipe of heorte after þe bisne of þat eadi forbisme, B.
 meiden ouer all oðre. marie godes moder. for þa þe hehe hire to, B.
 engel eabriel grette hire. ⁊ brohte hire þe tidinge of godes [Fol. 126a].
 akenesse; loke hu lah ha lette hire þa ha onswerede þus bi
 hire selue. low her mi lauordes þralle; After þi word quod
 ha mote me iwarden. And tah ha ful were of alle gode
 þeawes; ane of hire mekelec ha seide ⁊ song to Heliza-
 beth. for mi lauerd biſch his þuſttenes mekelac me ſchulen
 elepien quod ha eadi alle leoden. Nimi þeme meiden ⁊ un-
 derſtond herbi. þat mare for hire mekelec þen for hire
 meidenhad ha lette þat ha ifond ſwuch grace at ure lauerd.
 for al meidenhad; mekelec is muche wurð. ⁊ meidenhad
 wiðuten hit is eðeliche ⁊ unwurð for al ſwa is meiden
 imeidenhad wiðute mekelec; as is wiðute liht eoile in a
 laumpe. Eadi godes ſpuse haue þis ilke mihte þat tu ne
 þunche þeoſtri. ah ſchine as te ſunne iþi weres ſihðe. feahe
 þi meidenhad wið alle gode þeawes. þat þuncheð him feire. þe, B.
 Haue eauer iþin herte þe eadieſte of meidnes ⁊ meidenhades [Fol. 126b].
 moðer. ⁊ biſech ai hire þat ha þe lihte ⁊ þine luue ⁊ aa, B.
 ſtrengðe for to folhe in meidenhad hire þeawes. þenç o. forte folhen, B.
 st. katerine. o. st. margarete. st. enneis. st. Juliene. st.
 lucie. st. Cecille. ⁊ oþe oðre hali meidnes in heuene Hu
 ha nawt ane forfoken kinges ſunnes ⁊ eorles wið alle
 worldliche weolen ⁊ eorðliche wunnen; ah þoleden ſtronge
 pines ear ha walden nimen ham ⁊ derf deað on ende.
 þenç hu wel ham is nu. ⁊ hu ha bliſſeð þerfore bituhhe
 godes armes cwenes of heuene. And þif hit eauer timeð
 þat ti licomeſ luſt þurh þe falſe feond leadeð þe toward leadie, B.
 fleſchliche fulðe; onſwere iþi þoht tus. Ne geineð þe nawt þus, B.
 ſweoke. þullich ichulle beon imeidenes liſlade. Jlich heuene
 engel. Jchulle halde me hal þurh þe grace of godd af cunde
 me makede. þat paraiſe ſelhðe underfo me all ſwuch af [Fol. 126c].

Resolve to remain a maiden,

as if the alternative were hell.

1 Corinth. ix. 25.

Hide thyself in God.

Champions or confessors crown according to B.

He prays his exhortations may avail.

tors. Altogether, such I will be as is my dear leman, my precious Lord, and as is þat blessed maiden, þat he chose to himself for moðer. Such will I keep myself, truly unpol- luted, since I am to him wedded. Nor will I for a lust of a little while, þough it seems a delight, cast away þat þing, þe loss of which I should repent wiðout recovery, and pay for in hell wið every burning. þou wretched wight! all for nought þou provokest me to commit sin, and forego þe bliss upon bliss, þe crown upon crown of a maidens reward; and hast a wish and a will to cast me as a wretch into þy pit of punishment; þat instead of þe song of angels out of maidenhoods grace, greet and groan ever wið þe and wið þine in þe eternal horror of hell." If þou þus answerest to þy bodys lust and to þe fiends attempts, he shall flee from þee wið shame. And if he still after þis, soon enough, come to þee and continue to irritate þy flesh and prick þy heart, þy Lord God permitteð þis to enlarge þy reward; for, as St. Paul saið, none is crowned except who- soever fights stoutly in þat fight, and wið strong combating overcomeð her flesh; for þen is þe devil, wið his own guile, shamefully overcrown. When þou, as þe apostle saið, shalt not be crowned, except þou be assailed, for God will crown þee; he will permit þe evil one to assail þee þat þence þou mayst earn crown upon crown. Hence it is of most benefit to þee þat when he grieveð þee most, and wið temptations warreð more madly upon þee, if þou hidest þyself well under Gods wings: for by þis war he prepareð þee in spite of his teeð, þe bliss and þe crown of Christs chosen ones. And may Jesu Christ grant þee ðrough his blessed name, and all þem þat quit þe love of man of clay, to be his leman, and grant þat þey so retain þeir hearts wið him, þat neiþer þe promptings of þeir flesh, nor temp- tations of þe fiend, nor any of his earðly imps, daze þeir hearts wit, nor twist þem out of þe way, on which þey have entered: and may He help þem so in Him to hasten to heaven, till þey be thiðer mounted, as þeir bridal shall be, into all þat ever blissful is, to sit wiðout end, wið þe blessed bridegroom, from whom all happiness is derived. Amen.

weren ear ha gulten his earste hearman. Allun̄ge swuch
 ichulle beon as if mi deore leofmon mi deorewurðe lan̄erd.
 ⁊ as if tat eadi meiden þat he him cheaf to moder Al þe, B.
 swuch ichulle wite me treowliche unwemmet af ich am
 him iwedd̄et. ne nul ich nawt for a lust of a lute hwile þah ane, B.
 hit þunche delit awai warpe þat þing. hwas lure ichulle
 bireuien wiðute couerunge. ⁊ wið eche brune abuggen in
 helle. þu wrechwile ful wiht al for nawt þu prokeft me to
 forgulten ⁊ forgan þe blisse upo blisse þe crune upo crune
 of meidenes mede ⁊ willes ⁊ waldes warpe me as wrecche
 iþi learwite. And for þat englene song of meidenhades [Fol. 126d.]
 menske: wið þe ⁊ wið þine greden ai ⁊ granen iþe eche aa, B.
 grure of helle. ⁊ if þu þus onsweres to þi licomes lust ⁊ to
 þe feondes fondinge; he schal fleo þe wið schome. And
 ⁊ if he alles after þis inoh raðe atftonde ⁊ halt on to eili þi
 flesch ⁊ prokie þin herte. þi lauerd godd it þoleð him to
 muccli þi mede. for as sente pawel seið. ne beð nan icrunet
 bute hwas treoweliche iþulle seht sihte. ⁊ wið strong
 cockunge ouercume hire flesch for þenne if te deouel wið
 his ahne turn schomeliche awarpen. Hwen þu af te apostle þe, B.
 seið ne schalt beon icrunet bute þu beo asail̄et. for godd
 wile cruni þe; he wile leote ful wel þe unwiht asail̄e þe. ⁊ef for For, B.
 þat tu earni þer þurh crune upo crune for þi hit if þe meast [Fol. 127a.]
 god. þat hwen he greueð þe meast. ⁊ toward þe wið fondinge
 wodeluker weorreð. ⁊ if þu wel hilef te under godes wengef. þurh kem-
 for þurh þis weorre he þarkeð þe unþone hise teð þe blisse te, B.
 ⁊ te crune of cristes icorene. And ihesu crist leue þe þurh
 his blescede nome. ⁊ alle þeo þat leauen luue of lami mon; þe, B.
 for to beon his leofmon. ⁊ leue swa hare heorte halden to
 him. þat hare flesches eggunge. ne þe feondes fondunge. ne
 nan of his eorðliche limen; ne weorri hare heorte wit. ne
 wrenche hem ut of þe wei þat ha beoð in gongen And helpe
 ham swa in him to hihen toward heuene. aðat ha beon
 istihe þider af hare brudlac schal in al þat eauer sel if. wið
 þene seli brudgume þat siheð alle felhðe of; sitten buten
 ende. AMEN.



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